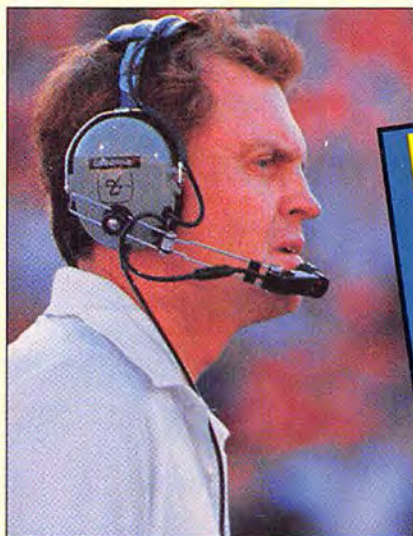


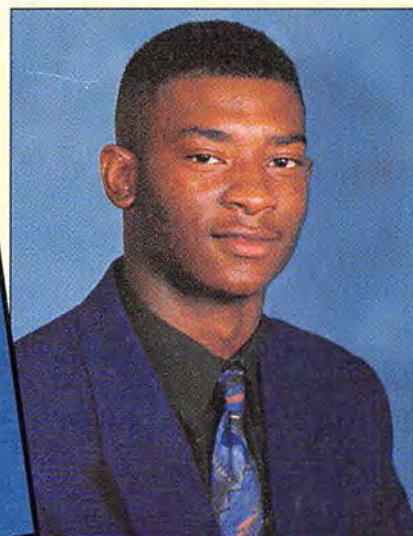
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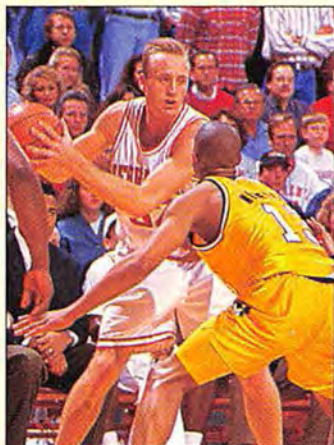


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AND THE ENTIRE 1994 CLASS**



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THE ROAD TO STARDOM?**

ALSO INSIDE

**RECRUITING DIARY:
A BEHIND THE SCENES
CHRONICLE OF THE FINAL
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HUSKER HOOPS

**DEALING WITH EARLY
DEPARTURES, AGAIN**



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TO LEAD NU TO OMAHA**

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED'S TOP 20 RECRUITING CLASSES

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Tennessee | 6. Alabama | 11. Nebraska | 16. Iowa |
| 2. Michigan | 7. Penn State | 12. Colorado | 17. LSU |
| 3. FSU | 8. Notre Dame | 13. Georgia | 18. Boston College |
| 4. USC | 9. North Carolina | 14. Oklahoma | 19. Texas |
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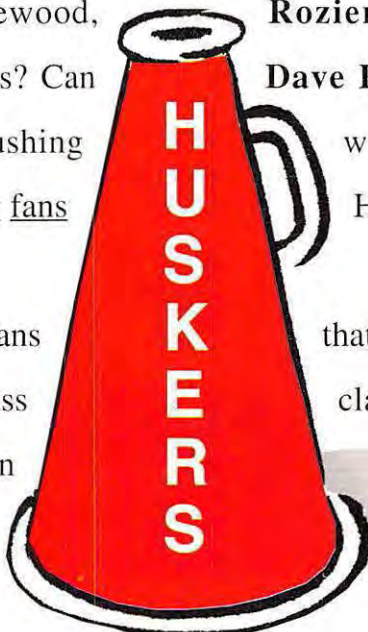
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Huskers Illustrated

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March 1, 1994 • Volume 14, No. 3

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NEXT ISSUE

The March 21st issue will be mailed during the last week in March and will wrap up the basketball season and preview the postseason. We will also take an in-depth look at the success of Tom Osborne and what he means to Nebraska football.



OPEN LETTER FROM FSU FAN

I just returned from the Orange Bowl game where my beloved Seminoles finally won their first national championship in a real squeaker. The Cornhuskers were obviously a much better team than anyone gave them credit for and their play impressed a lot of people, including myself. But what impressed me even more than the team's play, were the thousands of Nebraska fans I had the pleasure of sitting next to.

Two specific examples of outstanding sportsmanship are worth mentioning.

First, when an FSU player went down with an injury during the tense final minutes of the game, I was bowled over when, as the player came to his feet, more Nebraska fans applauded than did FSU fans.

Second, immediately following the heartbreaking miss of what would have been the game winning field goal, no fewer than a dozen Nebraska fans shook my hand adding the congratulatory words, "good game." In contrast, I can just about guarantee that the average Gator or Hurricane fan would have

probably offered me the middle finger accompanied with parting words detailing where I could stick the goal post.

Charlie Barnes, executive director of Seminole Boosters, Inc., has written on numerous occasions about the hospitable treatment and sportsmanship exhibited by Cornhusker fans when the Seminoles played in Lincoln back in 1980 and 1981. His message is always the same; that all Seminole fans should strive to conduct themselves in much the same manner that the Nebraska fans did on those two fall Saturdays.

By doing so, FSU could expect to develop the reputation of a program where each and every facet, from coaches to players to fans, is both respected and admired.

The Nebraska program already has this well deserved reputation. After finally experiencing first hand what he has been talking about all these years, I have to agree with Barnes. Nebraska fans are indeed a class act whose behavior and sportsmanship all fans would do well to emulate.

Brantley Henderson
Dunwoody, Ga.

AND THE LETTERS KEEP COMING

The sub-standard officiating at the Orange Bowl this year points out the need for a rule change which would permit officials to use TV replays on questionable calls.

If the system had been in place, Nebraska would have scored one more touchdown and Florida State

one fewer.

I also believe it's time the Big Eight considers to not renew the Orange Bowl contract. The Orange Bowl Committee and Florida fans are certainly lacking in class and show no respect to visiting team year after year.

Marlon Moore
Collierville, Tenn.

I feel the Cornhuskers outplayed the Seminoles top to bottom, and deserved to win the game. The Black Shirts and the rest of the Nebraska defense played the game I knew they could.

Nebraska lost on the scoreboard, but won the game on the field. The Nebraska Cornhuskers are No. 1 in my heart and will always be. That opinion is not based simply on wins and losses, but much more such as integrity, sportsmanship and consistency.

Todd Bean
Manteca, Calif.

I feel like the Big Red has proved it can play with anyone in the country, despite what the critics say.

The Huskers are going to be a team to be dealt with in the next couple of years. I would also like to commend the defense for its numerous stands against the FSU fastbreak offense.

Tim Scheer
Clearwater, Kan.

Nebraska outplayed Florida State in every way. Even my friends out here, who don't even follow Nebraska football, said we were taken by those Big East "officials."

I sure hope Nebraska fans saw the same game I did. I don't care to hear anyone bash Dr. Tom Osborne again. He's the greatest coach in America.

I can't understand why the Big Eight Conference would allow officials from just one conference to officiate.

Ron Griffis
Iowa City, Iowa

Don't worry Byron Bennett, your missed field goal didn't cost us the Orange Bowl. The officials had ruined our chances way before that. I have never seen a crew of officials determine the outcome of a game like that.

Tom Osborne proved once again that he is the best coach in the nation. The Huskers did gain some respect, but the Big Red are national

THREE-POINT PONDERING

During the Nebraska-Missouri basketball game on ESPN in January, one of the commentators said Eric Piatkowski (right) was Nebraska's leader in three-point field goals made. Even though Piatkowski has proven he is a great player, you mean to tell me he is the all-time leader at Nebraska? I find this hard to believe seeing how we've had great shooters like Jerry Fort, Tom Baack, Jack Moore, and Beau Reid at Nebraska.

Kris Tellermon
Lincoln, Neb.

Kris, ESPN was right. Piatkowski had made 139 three-pointers going into the season. That total was 34 better than second-place Ray Richardson (105). You also need to remember, the three-pointer didn't go into effect until the 1987 season. — Editor



champions in my eyes already.

Jeremy Jorgenson
Kalispell, Mont.

I would like to congratulate Trev Alberts for having such a monstrous game. If I remember correctly he is the first Nebraska player to win the Butkus Award. So perhaps his jersey should be retired.

Roger Wong
Los Angeles, Calif.

It is not often that sporting events should have an impact on personal precepts and values. However, the performance of the Cornhuskers on New Year's Day ascended beyond the athletic realm and gave insight on life.

The Huskers performed on a field that held the haunts of losses gone by, especially 1984. Also, Nebraska battled a national sentiment that is perhaps the most biased of all time. Not to mention the loss of key personnel throughout the course of the game. No matter, everyone involved stepped up and delivered one of the most heartfelt effort I've ever seen. Oh let me tell you about the heart of Cory Dixon and Trumane Bell. The courage of a Trev Alberts led defense. The confidence of a Turner Gillish Tommie Frazier. And above all, the steely resolve of the classiest coach in college football, Tom Osborne.

When faced with personal crisis in my life, I will turn to these example and find solace, guidance and strength.

Thomas Smith
Denver, Colo.

My heart is still racing. My eyes are still full of tears. I can only sum the game up by saying you played your hearts out. Your fans across the nation are proud of you. Nebraska is still No. 1 with us. Hold your heads up high. Thank you for a great season.

Marc Kaplan
Santa Fe, N.M.

Should we send crying towels to South Bend, Ind?

Don DuTeau
Shawnee, Kan.

We didn't play like a 17 1/2 point underdog and the ticket holders at the Orange Bowl sure got their mon-ey's worth.

So to all the sports writers and experts who were among the Nebraska bashing clowns that

accused us of playing an easy schedule, I say IN YOUR FACE. Wait till next year when Mr. (Tommie) Frazier takes the field and puts new meaning to Go Big Red.

Jim Renshaw
San Jose, Calif.

I don't agree with or buy into the fact that the Huskers were cheated. It is impossible to cheat true champions, for the key ingredient is imbedded in the hearts of these few great.

In reference to Tom Osborne's book, there really is more to "More Than Winning" than the world is ready to hear. God weighs the hearts of mankind and it is He and only He

who can truly interpret our motives. However, what this Husker team displayed throughout the season and distinctly in the 1994 Orange Bowl can be interpreted as second to none.

The Bible tells us "to run with endurance, the race that is set before us," and "to run in such a way that you may win." How does it feel to be winners?

Mark Lincoln
Omaha, Neb.

• • •

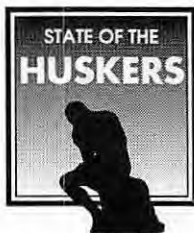
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Bowl Game Gave Huskers Chance To Make A Difference Off The Field

Unless you're among those recruiting fanatics who follow the careers of Nebraska football players from the day they sign letters of intent, you probably aren't familiar with Ed Morrow, a redshirted freshman outside line-backer.

Morrow was a prep All-American at McCluer High School in St. Louis, Mo., and a member of Nebraska's highly regarded recruiting class in 1992. But Morrow settled into the anonymity of a redshirt season as a freshman that fall, and he has yet to emerge, as he almost certainly will.

Even so, Morrow showed the character for which Nebraska looks during the Cornhuskers' Orange Bowl trip, when he joined teammates Ernie Beler, John Reece, Toby Wright and Mike Minter on a visit to a Miami housing project to speak to youngsters about the dangers of street life.

The visit was sponsored by the Metro Dade police force and the Office of Housing and Urban Development. The players volunteered to make the visit and speak to the youngsters, African-American males, none of them older than 10 or 11. "If it had been older kids, I probably wouldn't have gone," said Morrow. By the time they're in their teens, behavior patterns are set.

Beler, a senior from Bayonne, N.J., agreed with Morrow. "From (age) 11 to 18, there's almost a generation we've lost already," he said.

"What do these kids have to look forward to? That moved me a lot. I used to think I had it rough."

Morrow said he went because he grew up in a neighborhood in suburban St. Louis that had many of the same problems as those in inner-city Miami, where the environment is one of poverty, broken homes and drugs.

"It wasn't a ghetto but close to it, a lot of crime," he said of the neighborhood in which he grew up.

Morrow said he was lucky; he had strong family support growing up. He drew inspiration from his mom, who "died young, very young," he said. "My stepmother raised me.

"I've always thought, 'My mom gave her life for me to be born; I

must be here for a purpose.'"

That sense of purpose has kept him from ending up the way many in his neighborhood have. "I could have gone the wrong way. I probably still could. But I won't," Morrow said.

Morrow took that resolve with him to the Miami housing project. He wanted to encourage the youngsters there to stay in school, apply themselves and get an education instead of taking the easy way out.

That way involves drugs, and it leads to a dead-end, he said.

"Role models; that's what they need," said Beler. "Right now, it's drug dealers. That's short-term. That's nothing. It won't be there. They'll either be killed or locked up.

We need more support. It has to come from a lot of areas, more alternative schools . . . I don't know where all we have to go."

Each of the Cornhuskers spoke to the youngsters. "I tried to make it fun," said Morrow, who asked questions to encourage participation.

"Do you like seeing crackheads and needle tracks?" he asked.

"No," they responded.

"What can you do to prevent it in your neighborhood?"

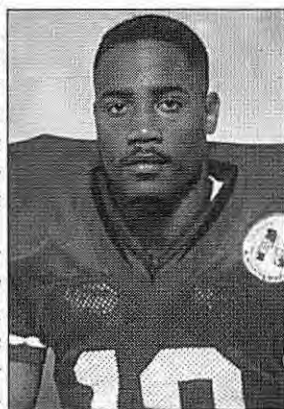
"Call 911," they replied.

"I wanted them to answer, 'Get an education, go to school,'" Morrow said with a wry smile.

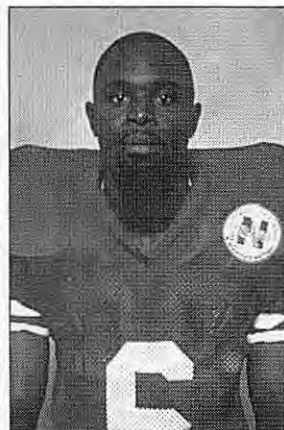
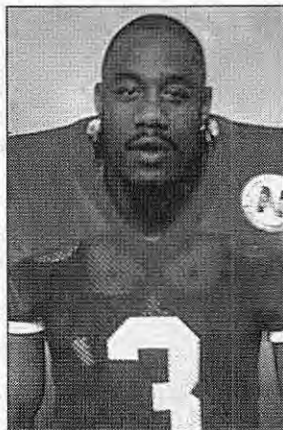
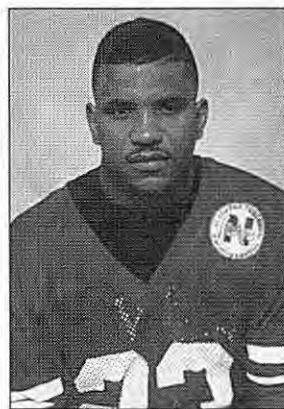
The players were told that statistically, less than 10 percent of the youngsters would complete high school and that nearly 20 percent wouldn't reach age 18. By their late teens, more than half of them will have been arrested at least once.

"I thought the numbers were staggering. It's not quite as serious in St. Louis. At least, I don't think so," Morrow said.

He wasn't surprised that the program was targeted at children so young, however. "By the time a kid



(Clockwise from right) Ernie Beler, John Reece, Toby Wright and Mike Minter were members of a group that talked with inner-city kids on the dangers of street life while in Miami.



"Role models; that's what they need (inner-city kids). Right now, it's drug dealers. That's short term. That's nothing. It won't be there. They'll either be killed or locked up."

— Ernie Beler

is ready to go to school, he's old enough to know who's got the money and who doesn't," said Morrow.

The drug dealers do.

Morrow didn't set himself up as a role model, and not just because he has yet to establish himself as a football player at the University of Nebraska.

"Parents are the role models, though, in some cases, they (the kids) need somebody to look up to," Morrow said. "I'm not perfect, but I go to school, put in my time, to get my degree."

Cornhusker Coach Tom Osborne asked the team before it left for Miami if any players would be interested in visiting the projects. Many players raised their hands, Morrow said, but only the five ended up making the visits.

"I probably surprised a lot of the guys because I don't talk too much," Morrow said. "It was like a challenge for me."

Not everyone could have gone, anyway. "You can't take a black kid who grew up in the suburbs," said Morrow. "He couldn't relate."

Morrow could relate, and he's glad he went. He'd do it again if given the chance.

"If we make the trip back (to Miami) next year, I would love to go and see how many of the kids are still in the program," he said.

Considering what Nebraska has returning, the odds are good he'll have that opportunity. The 1994 Cornhuskers well could win a fourth consecutive Big Eight Conference championship.

Belser has completed his eligibility and won't return. But he plans to continue dealing with the problem. Working with such youngsters is his career goal.

"This is what I want to do. I could get a job making a lot of money, but I'll be happy helping kids," he said. "They're our future."

Morrow also wanted to make a difference by visiting the projects, to "help somebody," he said.

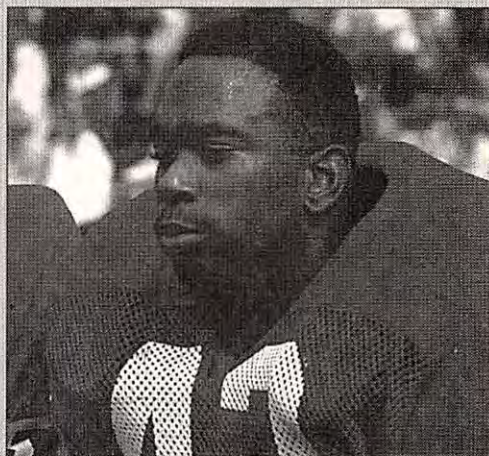
The task is considerable, "but even if you help only one kid, it would be worth it," said Morrow, who plans to become a youth counselor.

"Everybody's important, no matter who you are."

You might not know who Ed Morrow the linebacker is just yet. But he has already represented Nebraska well, without playing a down of football. ■

"I've always thought, My mom gave her life for me to be born; I must be here for a purpose."

— Ed Morrow



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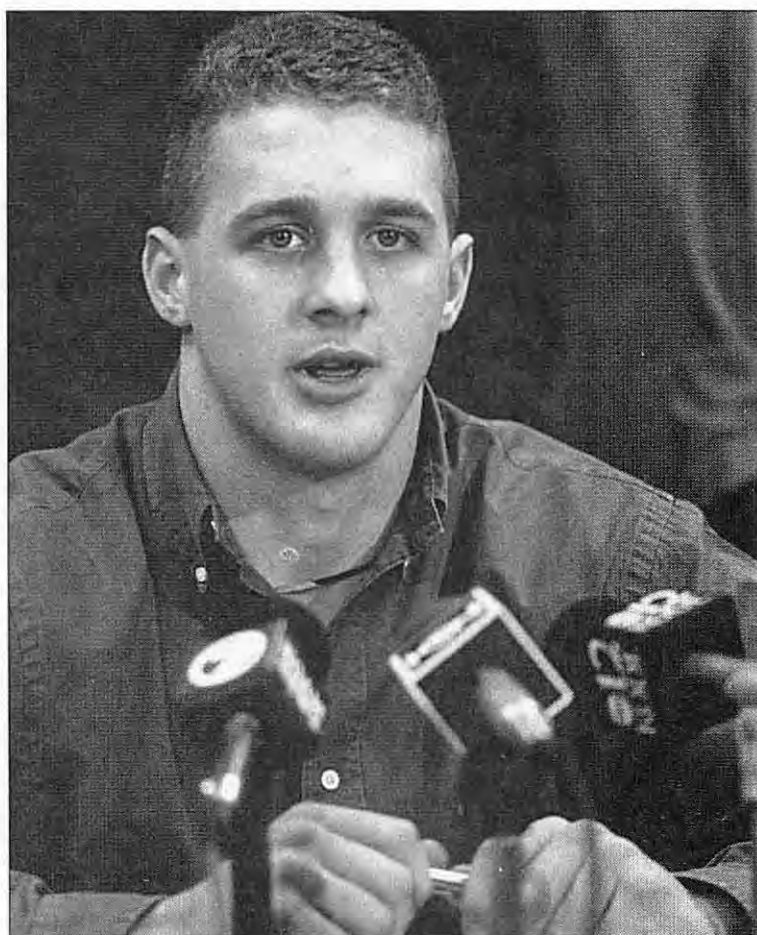
Although the state's best athlete opted for Notre Dame, Nebraska moved on undaunted and signed a class that included plenty of prep All-America candidates including outside linebacker Grant Wistrom

The months of December and January proved to be very beneficial for the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Earning a chance to play for a national championship in the Orange Bowl, the Huskers were constantly in the national spotlight, though much of it had to do with why Nebraska should even be there. But that's another story.

But while winning the mythical national title was high on the list of priorities, Nebraska knew it also had recruiting business to take care of while in Miami.

That's not an easy chore when preparation for a national title game takes up 99 percent of your time. Husker on-campus recruiting coordinator Dave Gillespie was responsible for coordinating that other one percent.

Traditionally when a team is preparing to play for a national title it falls behind in recruiting. With the constant focus on the game itself, recruiting takes a back seat with the hope that the publicity and the hype surround-



Bob Foos

ing the game will allow you catch up in early January.

"Any time you play for a national championship your recruiting suffers just a little," Gillespie said. "However, we've gone to a major January bowl almost every year and we think we know how to handle the preparations of playing in a big bowl game, yet concentrate on our recruiting as well so we don't fall behind."

The Huskers took advantage of the early pre-game publicity and brought in a group of athletes in early January. That move garnered four commitments before the Huskers sprinted onto the field at the Orange Bowl.

In-state outside linebacker Travis Toline of Wahoo, Neb., center Ted Butler of Lincoln (Southeast) and offensive lineman Brandt Wade of Springfield (Platteview) gave early "yes" votes to the Huskers. The first out of state commitment came from outside linebacker Mike Rucker of St. Joseph (Benton), Mo.

"Those commitments set the stage for our recruiting effort," Gillespie said. "Our goal is to go out and recruit every Division-I recruit in the state of Nebraska and that is our top priority. I think every year we get that done. It isn't something that just happens, we lay the ground work over years by constantly going into those high schools working relationships with their coaches and administrators."

"We let everybody know we want

1994 Nebraska Letter-of-Intent Signees

NAME	YR	POS	HT	WT	HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL)
Butler, Ted	FR	OL	6-1	240	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
Crayton, Tray	FR	S	6-2	195	Oceanside, Calif. (El Camino)
Dumitrescu, Constantine	FR	OL	6-5	300	Hayward, Calif. (Moreau)
Elder, Jon	FR	QB	6-3	195	Sioux City, Iowa (West)
Foreman, Jay	FR	WB	6-3	195	Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie)
Jackson, Sheldon	FR	TE	6-3	205	Diamond Bar, Calif. (Damien)
Knuckles, Brian	JR	IB	5-11	195	Coffeyville, Kan. (Coffeyville CC)
McFarlin, Octavious	FR	S	6-0	180	Bastrop, Texas (Bastrop)
Reddick, David	FR	WB	5-10	175	Camden, N.J. (Woodrow Wilson)
Roy, Dorrick	FR	TE	6-4	220	Inglewood, Calif. (Montclair Prep)
Rucker, Mike	FR	OLB	6-6	225	St. Joseph, Mo. (Benton)
Toline, Travis	FR	OLB	6-4	220	Wahoo, Neb. (Wahoo)
Wade, Brandt	FR	OL	6-3	275	Springfield, Neb. (Platteview)
Warfield, Eric	FR	SE	6-1	175	Texarkana, Ark. (Arkansas)
Wiggins, Shevin	FR	CB	5-11	170	Palmetto, Fla. (Manatee)
Wiltz, Jason	FR	DT	6-4	280	New Orleans, La. (St. Augustine)
Wistrom, Grant	FR	OLB	6-5	230	Webb City, Mo. (Webb City)

Others Receiving Scholarships

Erstad, Darin	SO* P/K	6-2	195	Jamestown, N.D. (Jamestown)
Livingston, John	JR WR	6-0	175	San Marcos, Calif. (Palomar CC)

*Played one year of baseball for Nebraska on a baseball scholarship in 1993. He will have three years to play three seasons, beginning in 1994. Erstad also has three seasons of baseball eligibility remaining.

the top players in Nebraska to always play for us."

This would not be a banner year to recruit in Nebraska.

Only five athletes would earn Division-I scholarships. With Toline, Butler and Wade in the fold the Huskers already had three of the five players. Headlining a thin year for in-state was athlete Ty Goode of Lincoln (Southeast).

With the ability to play on both sides of the ball, Goode was rated as one of the top 100 players in the country and was being recruited by every major program in the country.

The Huskers found they weren't leading early on as Goode talked about the need to go out of state. With so few athletes in-state the Huskers knew they would be gathering those frequent flyer miles by the thousands.

"We go into each year hoping to have a strong nucleus in-state, with a least seven or eight guys," Gillespie said. "This year just didn't turn out that way and that makes our job that much more difficult. Our assistant coaches had to work extremely hard in traveling to fill this class out."

The Huskers were in the hunt for the top talent from coast-to-coast. Heading the list was *USA TODAY* first

"We go into each year hoping to have a strong nucleus in-state, with at least seven or eight guys. This year just didn't turn out that way and that makes our job that much more difficult."

— Dave Gillespie

team selection Grant Wistrom of Webb City, Mo. Wistrom is an outside linebacker who resembles Husker all-everything Trev Alberts.

Wistrom is the type of athlete that gets over 100 offers from major college programs from all over the country. He decided to look at two major factors in deciding where to visit: location (closeness to Webb City) and quality of the program.

The Wistrom family wanted Grant to choose a school so they could travel by car to the home games, yet they wanted their son to choose a school that he would be proud and happy to play for.

After sifting through all the offers, Wistrom decided to visit Nebraska, Michigan, Stanford, Miami and Oklahoma.

Closer to home, the Huskers shored up a major need at wide receiver by signing John Livingston of Palomar Junior College, Calif. It was also learned that Cornhusker left fielder Darin Erstad would trade in his baseball scholarship for a football offer. Erstad, as it turns out can kick a football as well as hit a curveball. He will do both next season at Nebraska.

All the while Wistrom took a key visit to Michigan and loved everything about it. The Wolverines had the early lead.

The weekend of January 14th turned out to be a banner one for the Huskers as a flame-throwing quarterback came into the fold, three of the best from California said "yes" and the Huskers stole the best from Minnesota to Nebraska.

California defensive back Tray Crayton of Oceanside (El Camino), offensive lineman Constantine Dumitrescu of Hayward (Moreau) and tight end Dorrick Roy of Inglewood (Montclair Prep) all visited on the same week-

RECRUITING DIARY

Immediately following the masterful Orange Bowl performance, the Nebraska coaching staff parted from Miami to points across the United States to visit recruits. They had no time to reflect on a magnificent season, only time to think about the future.

George Darlington left for California, Kevin Steele went up the road to northern Florida, Frank Solich and Ron Brown went to the East Coast and Turner Gill headed for Texas and Louisiana. Tom Osborne went everywhere, hooking up with his assistants as they visited top prospects.

Nebraska's tremendous 11-1 season had put the coaches on the door steps of blue chips from coast to coast. Top recruits take several recruiting trips because they have so many options to explore.

Schools that go after top recruits learn to be patient because verbal commitments are a long time in coming. Such was the case with the 1994 recruiting season.

The coaches had to be patient like never before, and though they wouldn't readily admit it, they were sitting on pins and needles while the recruits sat on the fence.

A few verbal commitments were made early, but the overall measure of the recruiting class could only be made when the final pen came to rest on the letters of intent.

What follows is a day by day account of the events that transpired in the week leading up to the national signing day — February 2, 1994



To date the Huskers staff have received verbal commitments from: Ted Butler, Travis Toline, Brandt Wade, Mike Rucker, John Elder, Tray Crayton, Derrick Roy, Constantine Dumitrescu, Jay Foreman, Octavious McFarlin, Eric Warfield and Jason Wiltz.

Two other scholarships have been set aside for John Livingston, a receiver transfer from Arizona State and Darin Erstad, a baseball stand-out who will give kicking a shot this coming season.

Wednesday was a cold sleety day in the heartland. Recruiting coordinator Dave Gillespie hadn't heard any news of substance from the field. There were no new commitments.

Osborne and Darlington were visiting Dumitrescu in Hayward, Calif., making sure everything was set with the 300-pound offensive line prospect.

Gill and Steele were in Atlanta, Ga., visiting highly sought Heins Ward, an option quarterback. The unexpected departure of Ben Rutz (see page 46) left the quarterback position a little shallow. Heins did it all for his high school, running back punts and kicks, playing defensive back and running and throwing with great proficiency. The bid for Heins' services had come down to Nebraska and Georgia.

Holding down the fort in Lincoln, Gillespie makes several phone calls including at least one a day to each of the 12 to 15 "fence sitters." Gillespie feels the overall mood was one of anticipation at that point.

More key prospects remain undecided.



Another day of anticipation around the football offices. Gillespie continues with his phone calls, with some going to the high school coaches. Several of the NU coaches are making their way back to Lincoln for the final recruiting

weekend. Osborne arrives from California at about 1 p.m. and heads straight for the office to make phone calls. Many of the coaches claim to develop cauliflower ear, a condition usually reserved for wrestlers.

The day passes fairly quickly without much news. Later in the day the word gets around that Lendon Henry, a running back from Port Arthur, Texas has decided to go to Colorado. It is a disappointment, but not a crushing loss.

As time passes, some good news filters in. Sheldon Jackson, a prized tight end from Laverne, Calif., says he is coming. Kenny Cheatham, a split end from Phoenix, Ariz., also commits. Both are outstanding players and are welcome additions.

Osborne takes a little time out to eat dinner and then continues his phone calls. He is on the family phone from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. tying up the line and running up a considerable bill. He is unaware that Husker fans are being led astray over the radio waves by self appointed recruiting guru Max Emfinger.

Emfinger is being interviewed by Jim Rose, host of Sports Day Mid-America on KLIN out of Lincoln.

The program is a source of comfort on cold winter nights to Husker fans starved for sports news, including recruiting. Emfinger says Nebraska received verbal commitments from two of the top five high school players in the nation. He names two Florida players.



Friday starts out like most days in Nebraska, slow and uneventful. Most of the coaches are in town. Recruiting will be done primarily by phone as coaches prepare for the incoming prospects.

Steele and Gill are out pounding the pavement. Steele is in Alabama making a last minute overture to linebacker Chris Edwards. Turner is in Dallas preparing to fly into Lincoln with wing back/receiver Anthony Bookman.

Gillespie is busy making his daily allotment of phone calls. He is also busy finalizing plans for the weekend. The recruits will be shown the facilities, meet with their position coaches and with Osborne. They will also meet professors in their intended field of study and academic support staff and strength coaches.

end. It wasn't planned, it just turned out that way. All three decided to commit to the Huskers that weekend. All agreed the visit sold them on Nebraska.

"I think we all had an interest in Nebraska before the visit, but the weekend sold us totally on the school and community," Dumitrescu said. "We didn't plan to commit together, in fact we really didn't find out that we all committed until the plane ride home. However, I wasn't surprised to find out we all did because Nebraska provided a great family atmosphere we were all looking for and of course the football program speaks for itself."

The Huskers have always recruited California really well and didn't surprise California based Allen Wallace of *Super Prep* magazine with their success.

"We have just come to expect Nebraska coming into California and taking three or four of the best prospects back to the Midwest," said Wallace. "There is a lot of talent in California and we had Roy and Crayton on our All-American team and Dumitrescu as an All-Area selection. All three are dynamite prospects."

The Huskers were out to sign two quarterback prospects and grabbed one during the same time period in John Elder of Sioux City (West), Iowa.

"If Ben Rutz had stayed, we would be fine," said Tom Osborne.

The situation is further aggravated by Brook Berringer's elbow problems. "We're awful thin at quarterback," Osborne said.

Elder "might have to play" as a true freshman, he said. "But if Tommie (Frazier) and Brook can stay healthy, he (Elder) probably would red-shirt. We'd rather not play Jon in his first year."

Two other highly touted quarterbacks, Hines Ward of Edison, Ga., and Kevin Johnson of Trenton, N.J., were considering the Huskers. The Huskers were battling Georgia and Florida State for Ward and Johnson was also looking toward Syracuse.

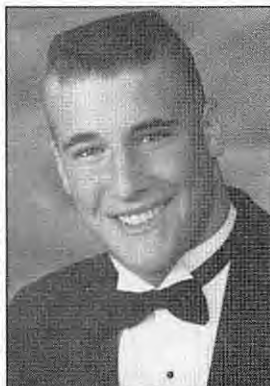
While the Huskers worked their recruiting magic in California, Cornhusker assistant Dan Young was busy in Minnesota. Minnesota has not always been a fertile recruiting ground for the Huskers, however this year they made an exception for the state's top player in wing-back/defensive back Jay Foreman.

Foreman's dad, Chuck, had been a star for the Minnesota Vikings during the 1970s, but it was apparent that Jay wasn't going to play his college ball in Minnesota. The Huskers beat Iowa to this commitment after his visit on the 17th of January.

Defensive back Octavious McFarlin of Bastrop, Texas, also said "yes" at this point and the Husker recruiting class was beginning to take shape. However, the word was out that Goode was going to disappoint the home folks and head to Notre Dame. Goode never took an official visit to Nebraska and it was apparent from the get go that the Huskers really weren't in the picture.

"We never really got an opportunity with Ty," Gillespie said. "I am sure Ty thought this thing through very well and we wish him the best."

Of course Foreman's commitment and the fact his ath-



The Huskers went after defensive line prospect, Damian Peter, but he signed with Notre Dame even though his brothers, Christian and Jason, already play for Nebraska.

letism to play the same positions as Goode's will help ease the Huskers' disappointment.

Wistrom ruled out Miami and said it was down to Michigan and Nebraska with a visit remaining with Oklahoma. Eric Warfield of Texarkana, Ark., was heavily recruited by the Hogs and Nebraska had to fight Arkansas until signing day for this signature.

The bad news finally came.

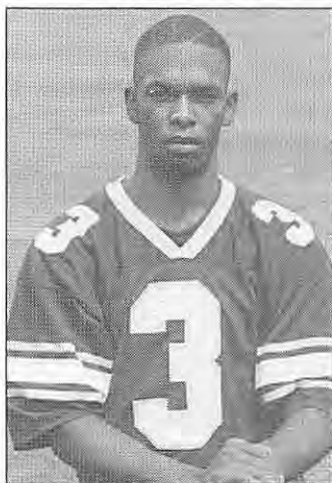
Wistrom still liked Michigan even after a visit to Nebraska. He had decided to visit OU in midweek and then take a final weekend look at Stanford. Michigan seemed to be his school of choice with time winding down, but Nebraska still had the driving distance factor in its favor.

Jermame Tuman of Liberal, Kan., was a similar athlete that was also considering Michigan, Nebraska and OU. Tuman was an All-American.

With the final weekend of visits approaching the Huskers pulled a big surprise in Louisiana when defensive tackle Jason Wiltz of New Orleans (St. Augustine), La., picked the Huskers over LSU, Texas A&M and Colorado. Wiltz was ranked as one of the top five defensive line prospects in the country and his commitment allowed the Huskers to once again recruit out of their once fertile recruiting area of Louisiana.

"In the last four years we have actually only signed a couple of players in Louisiana," Gillespie said. "Louisiana always has a great number of outstanding players and this season Turner Gill (Husker assistant coach) recruited the New Orleans area and did a great job of convincing Jason this was the best place for him.

If Amp Campbell (below) of Sarasota, Fla., passes his ACT test he will most probably sign with Florida. A bad score could mean he would end up a Husker.



"We have also had some success recruiting St. Augustine High before and one of our former players, Rick Burns, is an assistant coach at that school as well. So, we had some things going for us this time around."

Heading into the final weekend in January the Huskers were still in on some of the biggest names in prep recruiting.

Wistrom ruled out OU and Stanford and said he would meet with Michigan coaches in

his home and take another unofficial visit to Nebraska. He wanted one more look at Nebraska to see if it could match what he liked in Michigan.

Tuman had already committed to Michigan and the Huskers were beginning to make some noise in Florida. The final weekend would be important for the Huskers with some of the biggest names in prep recruiting hanging in the balance.

Tight end Sheldon Jackson of Diamond Bar (Damien), Calif., was definitely looking to get out of California and was the first big name to say yes from that weekend. This top 100 California talent was leaning toward OU until he took that final visit to Nebraska.

"I wanted to go to school outside of California and when I took that last visit to Nebraska it was just everything I was looking for," Jackson said. "I liked my visit to

Saturday night the recruits will eat with some of the current Huskers and go to the Nebraska-Oklahoma basketball game. Most will depart Lincoln by noon Sunday and get home in time for the Super Bowl.

By 5 p.m. there is still no new news. No one has committed, but then again, no one has de-committed. The coaches are getting used to the suspense.

The visiting recruits begin arriving early in the evening. Most of the evening is spent getting them settled into their hotel rooms. Each recruit is assigned a host player. The host player goes to dinner with the recruit on Friday and Saturday and includes the recruit in social activities.



All of the coaches are in town now. Four scholarship recruits and six potential walk-ons are ready to be shown around.

The four recruits with scholarship potential are David Riddick, Brian Knuckles, Grant Wistrom and Anthony Bookman.

Wistrom had made an official visit earlier in the season when school at Nebraska was out. He decided he needed to come back and visit while everyone was on campus so he could get a better feel for what the school was really like. He drove up from Missouri with his parents for the weekend.

The first order of the day was to view the 1993 highlight video. It is a very impressive recruiting tool and it invokes a positive impression with the recruits.

After viewing the video, the recruits are taken to eat breakfast with faculty members. They discuss their academic interests with the faculty and receive a lot of general information about the university.

Following breakfast, the recruits embark on a series of appointments. At 3:30 p.m. the recruits are taken back to their rooms to rest and soak in some of what they had seen. At 5 p.m. they will go to dinner with their host and then to the basketball game.

Throughout the day Gillespie and coaches continue to call undecided prospects. There was still no word or a final decision from Ward or any others.



Super Bowl Sunday starts early for the Husker staff. Starting at 7:30 a.m., the recruits take turns visiting with Osborne for a final time. After the players left, many coaches stick around. Following a conversation focusing on the lack of commitments,

the coaches break ranks and head for their homes to watch the game and continue their endless phone call routine.

Osborne is on the phone non-stop from the second quarter on. He calls coaches and prospects, including those who had just left Lincoln. As the evening wears on, news comes that the dam of indecision was giving way.

Wistrom was impressed enough by his second visit that he commits when contacted. Later, Knuckles also confirms his intentions to come to Nebraska.

Osborne receives word that Ward has indicated to Steele that he is leaning toward Georgia because of proximity.

A big boost comes at 8:05 p.m. when Osborne gets Amp Campbell of Sarasota, Fla., on the phone. He is considered one of the top defensive backs in the nation. Campbell tells Osborne that he is coming to Nebraska.



The word is out that Shevin Wiggins, named Florida's "Mr. Football" for 1993 is coming to Nebraska. Wiggins had over 2,000 yards as a running back. Gillespie and the staff are beginning to feel like they are getting over the hump. One or two more

good players will round out an outstanding recruiting class.

Ward is reported to be undecided again. He is having a tough time making up his mind. He has letters of intent from Nebraska and Georgia.

Riddick is going to wait until he goes out to eat with his family Monday night before announcing his decision. He seems to be leaning strongly toward Nebraska.

Cheatham from Arizona is now wavering.



Riddick has finally committed. The coaches are feeling pretty good about things now and are starting to unwind. Gillespie is busy sending the letters of intent to the players. The recruits are told that they need to send a fax copy of the letter at 8 a.m.

Wednesday to the football department. When the recruits are finished signing and faxing, they will then turn over the official letter to a courier hired by the university to send it to Nebraska.

Some disappointing news comes when Cheatham makes it known that he is going to wait awhile before deciding to play football. He will not sign the letter of intent. As expected, Ward has finally decided to commit to Georgia.

The day passes without any major surprises, which is good at this stage. All of the coaches are beat and are ready to have everything done.



Everything goes smoothly. The faxes come in on time and everything proceeds according to plan. One fax is missing. Campbell had decided to wait until after he makes a final attempt at the ACT test before deciding.

Campbell's decision is not alarming. There is still high hope that he will end up signing.

Osborne reveals the price of such success later at his news conference remarking he could not remember a year that involved more effort, travel or more phone calls to get 18 "yes" votes. ■

OU a lot, but there was just more of a family atmosphere at Nebraska."

With a day or two to go before signing day the Huskers also turned the tables on the top junior college running back in the country.

Brian Knuckles of Coffeyville Junior College, Kan., was rated the best running back to come out of that excellent program since Mike Rozier earned his spurs before winning a Heisman Trophy at Nebraska. He would be the only pure I-back recruited by the Huskers in 1994.

The commitments from Jackson and Knuckles enhanced the image of this class greatly, but some big names were still available. Lost were quarterbacks Ward and Johnson to Georgia and Syracuse respectfully, quarterback Tim Anderson of Sarasota, Fla., to the Wishbone at Oregon State. Johnson choose to play center at Colorado and linebacker Demetro Stephens of Sandersville, Ga., signed with Florida State.

However, the most prestigious recruit of them all had a good time on his unofficial visit to the Husker campus. Wistrom, took the visit with his family and Michigan still very much on his mind.

"When I really took a long look at it, Nebraska was everything that Michigan was and more," Wistrom said. "I have to admit that it took that final unofficial visit for me to see that, but I have to be thankful that my parents suggested I take that visit again because it really worked out for the whole family."

The Huskers had their No. 1 prospect in the fold, but weren't through recruiting.

The Huskers were back in their fertile recruiting ground of Palmetto, Fla., looking to ink another great one and they got a "yes" from wingback Shevin Wiggins. Rated as one of the top 24 players in Florida and the best pure skill position athlete by many, Wiggins decided to follow in the footsteps of Tommie Frazier, Tyrone Williams and Justin Stephens. The decision was significant to the Husker recruiting efforts.

"We were aware of Shevin's abilities for sometime because of our success recruiting at that high school in the past," Gillespie said. "Our recruitment of Shevin is really a testament to how we have handled the athletes of that school in the past and how we will deal with them in the future."

Florida may still prove to be beneficial to the Cornhuskers recruiting effort.

At press time defensive back Amp Campbell of Sarasota (Riverview), Fla., was waiting to see what his latest test scores looked like. If he passes that test then Campbell will sign with Florida. If he is still short with three test to go, he will sign with the Huskers and hope for the best.

Only in the wacky world of recruiting do you hope for an athlete to fall just a little short on an ACT score, only to do well later after signing with Nebraska.

As a whole it is a recruiting class that can really run.

"The thing that strikes me about it is the great speed and athleticism in it," Gillespie said. "We put a priority on recruiting speed here and I think it showed this past year on the football field."

"I think this class is only going to add to that with tremendous athleticism from top to bottom and again not always the most highly recruited players, according to the recruiting services. But we feel we do our homework very well and know what we want in a player. We feel that we found it in this class." ■



EYEING THE FUTURE

The early returns are in and it appears the Nebraska football team's 1994 recruiting class will rank among the nation's best, according to self-proclaimed recruiting experts.

The initial consensus seems to be that the Cornhusker recruits are Top 20-caliber, if not better.

That might be a little surprising because "this was one of the more difficult recruiting years we've had," Coach Tom Osborne said in announcing his recruits.

"In terms of effort and trying to get over the hump with players, getting them to say, 'yes,' I can't remember a year that took more work, travel and effort and was jammed into a shorter time. I don't know why."

Part of the reason is more restrictive NCAA rules regarding the recruiting process. Part was the fact that only three in-state players signed letters of intent with Nebraska.

"The one thing that made it difficult is that we were starting from a smaller base of Nebraskans than ever," said Osborne. "We looked as hard as we could. The perception is, sometimes we ignore Nebraska players and want them to walk on."

"But we'll push it a little bit on Nebraska players. Normally, we have five, six or seven players we offer in-state. This year, we offered four and got three."

Osborne said he hopes to supplement the recruiting class with 10 or 11 walk-ons from Nebraska. Some of those targeted "are still considering offers" from other schools.

Concentrating on speed and athletic ability, Nebraska once again proved it could go outside of the state and still recruit a solid class

In addition, several players already on campus will receive scholarships, among them linebacker Jamelle Williams from Merrillville, Ind., and running back Michael Booker from El Camino, Calif. That's assuming they meet eligibility requirements. Both are sitting out this year because of the NCAA's Proposition 48.

Because of the small in-state base, the Cornhuskers had an even greater national focus, and players seemed to wait longer to decide.

"We finished strong the last week, and that was unnerving when you're dealing with players from a considerable distance," Osborne said.

It also was unnerving that on the final weekend, some Cornhusker players were involved in highly publicized altercations in Lincoln. In one incident, players were assaulted in a motel, at a party for recruits.

Despite the problem, the two recruits signed with the Cornhuskers, Osborne said. "I don't think events of the last weekend seemed to affect people a lot. We had some people in the media calling players,

asking them if they still wanted to go to such a terrible place, and a few coaches were trying to take advantage and get back in the door."

Osborne said the Cornhuskers' undefeated regular season in 1993 and their performance against Florida State in the Orange Bowl game affected recruiting some.

It's often difficult to identify exactly what factors influence a recruit's final decision, according to Osborne: "Distance, weather, a girl they met at a party..."

Shevin Wiggins, who's from the same high school as current Cornhuskers Frazier and Tyrone Williams, will move from running back to wingback or cornerback, said Osborne, "mainly because of his size." At 5-foot-11 and 170, he'd be a pretty small I-back."

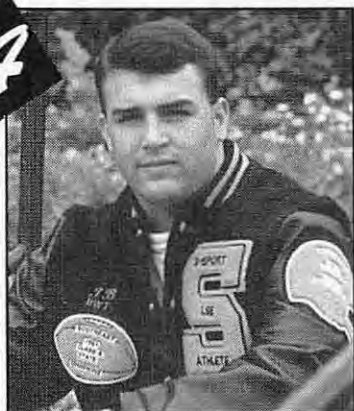
Other than getting only one quarterback, "there's a pretty good distribution by position," Osborne said. And just about all the recruits have met the freshman eligibility requirements under Prop 48.

"Three or four haven't qualified, but everybody's got a chance," said Osborne.

Nebraska's recruiting class appears to be solid. "We looked for speed and athletic ability, and I think we got plenty of both," Osborne said.

The hard work and long hours paid off. Based on his experience, the recruiting process was relatively clean and there wasn't a lot of negative recruiting, though "you always want to take a shower when it's over," he said. "You don't ever feel really good about it." ■

'94



HEIGHT: 6-1
WEIGHT: 240
SPEED: 5.0
BENCH: 340
BIRTHDAY:
 July 29, 1975

TED
BUTLER

Offensive Lineman

SCHOOL: Southeast (Lincoln, Neb.)

HOBBIES: Fishing

HONORS: As a junior he was All-Nebraska (Omaha World) and Super State (Lincoln Journal-Star). Named Defensive Player of the Year as a senior.

OTHER SPORTS: Wrestling (defending Class 2A heavyweight champion)

CHOSE NU OVER: Iowa, Iowa State, Wyoming

CAPSULE: Played center and nose guard for three seasons at Southeast and was a key player in their state runner-up finish in 1992. During Butler's three years, Southeast won two state championships and finished second once. Named the MVP of the 1993 Nebraska summer camp. He was the team's leading tackler in 1993, but was recruited to play offense. He totaled 94 tackles and 6.5 quarterback sacks in 1993. Butler also carries a 3.4 GPA.

HS Head Coach Chuck Mizerski: "Ted was a great player for us for three seasons. We played him at a very demanding position on offense at center then expected him to turn around and dominate on defense too. He's great at the point of attack and I think he will have a great career."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Ted will play center for us after a great athletic career at Southeast. He's been a dominant player in football, wrestling and is just a very good athlete. Ted's a very good technician on the field, so he should fit right in with the great centers we've had in the past."

Why Nebraska: "It was just the best situation for me to play in front of my family, friends and former teammates. I've grown up watching Nebraska football all my life and I know about the great tradition they have built over the years like going to the Orange Bowl almost every year. I wanted to be part of that."

Son of Mike and Karen Butler

'94



HEIGHT: 6-2
WEIGHT: 195
SPEED: 4.4
BENCH: 220
BIRTHDAY:
 March 24, 1976

TRAY
CRAYTON

Safety

SCHOOL: El Camino (Oceanside, Calif.)

HOBBIES: Fishing with his father

HONORS: All-American (Super Prep). Received the "Hit of the Year" award from the San Diego Union.

OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (three years)

CHOSE NU OVER: Texas A&M, Oregon, Washington State

CAPSULE: Crayton made over 100 tackles as a senior from his free safety position. While at quarterback, he rushed for 893 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also passed for 857 yards. A talented basketball player with a 34-inch vertical jump, Crayton was named the MVP of the Chino Hills Tournament earlier this year.

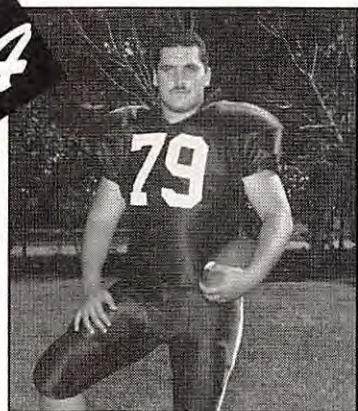
HS Head Coach Herb Meyer: "Tray is one of the most gifted athletes that I have ever coached at El Camino. I realize he will play defense at Nebraska, but he was a great option quarterback for us. Tray made good decisions at quarterback, was a shifty runner and threw the ball pretty well. He has great instincts in the secondary and will become a great player for Nebraska. Tray has the same kind of athletic ability that Mike Booker possess and Husker fans will find that out quickly."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Tray is a great athlete with good height and speed. He played quarterback at El Camino and free safety. He is going to provide us with a lot of athleticism and will be able to cover a lot of ground for us."

Why Nebraska: "I liked the academic program that they have at Nebraska. The great football program is understood because they are always successful, but for me it was their academics that sets them apart. Their excellent tutorial program will help me a great deal."

Son of Clarence and Josephine Crayton

'94



HEIGHT: 6-5
WEIGHT: 300
SPEED: 5.0
BENCH: 365
BIRTHDAY:
 March 14, 1976

CONSTANTINE
DUMITRESCU

Offensive Lineman

SCHOOL: Moreau (Hayward, Calif.)
HOBBIES: Weightlifting, Attending school
HONORS: All-America — top 89 athletes (Blue Chip), Best of the West (Long Beach Press Telegram), second-team All-Alameda County, first-team all-league and first team All-East Bay.
OTHER SPORTS: None
CHOSE NU OVER: California, Iowa, UCLA

CAPSULE: Moved to the United States from Romania in the fourth grade. Has only played four years of organized football. After three years playing tight end he moved to offensive tackle his senior season. Puts forward great effort in the weight room and has a record squat of 535 pounds.

Name is pronounced (Doo-muh-TRESS-cue)

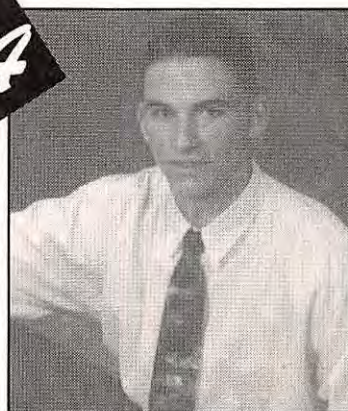
HS Head Coach Bill Walker: "Constantine is a raw athlete that just whipped people on natural ability. For someone around his size, he has the most athletic ability for a lineman that we have ever seen here. He's a quick learner who after just two years of varsity football has picked up the techniques in the down line very well. He's got a great future ahead of him because he's just scratched the surface with his ability."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Of course Constantine has great size and I guess the thing that is the most impressive about him is his ability to run. He gets out and pulls very easily down the field."

Why Nebraska: "I went to Nebraska because of its great reputation in football and academics. When you talk to athletes already on campus, you learn that Nebraska takes care of its athletes. They don't just sign you and then forget about you. I just feel it is a winning program that is only getting better and will continue to win in the future."

Son of Alex and Elena Dumitrescu

'94



HEIGHT: 6-3
WEIGHT: 195
SPEED: 4.67
BENCH: 240
BIRTHDAY:
 March 27, 1976

JON
ELDER

Quarterback

SCHOOL: West (Sioux City, Iowa)
HOBBIES: Sports
HONORS: All-Class Elite Team (Des Moines Register), first-team all-state, first-team all-conference and first-team All-Northwest Iowa.
OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (three years; second-team all-state), Track (three years; 6-foot-5 high jumper)
CHOSE NU OVER: Iowa, Minnesota, Iowa State

CAPSULE: Elder was rated as the top quarterback prospect in Iowa after completing 91-of-172 passes for 1,481 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also rushed for 400 yards and four scores. Elder was the two-time leading passer in the Sioux Interstate Conference and was the key figure in West's entry into the playoffs. Elder also averages 18 points in basketball and was an academic all-state honoree in football. In 1993, he captained the football team to a 7-2 record and took them to the state playoffs for the first time in school history.

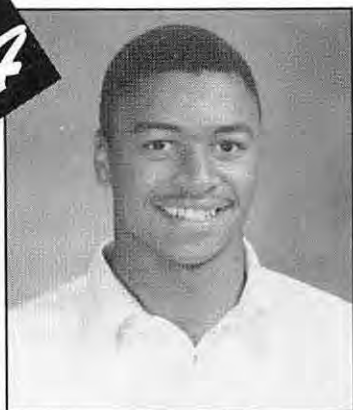
HS Head Coach Alan Charlson: "Jon is a very gifted quarterback who seems to bring the best out of his teammates. I like his leadership abilities as much or more than his athletic abilities. He is a very gifted athlete. He's got a great arm and has the speed and quickness to run the option. Jon will fit very nicely into Nebraska's system."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Jon has good height and is a very good athlete who will fit in very well with our offense. As a quarterback, he had good touch on the ball when he throws and should do well in our offense. He's a pretty balanced quarterback who can run well, too."

Why Nebraska: "I loved the tradition of Nebraska football and if you can quarterback their football team then you are the type of quarterback who can do a number of things on offense. The people in Nebraska were great and the academic program was second to none."

Son of Ellen Elder

'94



HEIGHT: 6-3
WEIGHT: 195
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 230
BIRTHDAY:
 Feb. 18, 1976

JAY

FOREMAN

Wingback/Defensive Back

SCHOOL: Eden Prairie (Eden Prairie, Minn.)
HOBBIES: Playing Sega video games, Sports
HONORS: All-America — (Super Prep), first-team all-state (twice) and all-conference (twice).
OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (all-conference as a junior), Track (all-state in the long jump)
CHOSE NU OVER: Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan

CAPSULE: As a running back, Foreman rushed for 950 yards and 14 touchdowns. Rated as the 13th-best athlete in the country by *Super Prep*. He also had 421 yards in receptions and 200 yards in kickoff returns. As a junior Foreman set an Eden Prairie record with 17 touchdowns. He's not bad with the halfback pass either, as he completed 3-of-4 passes for 182 yards and three touchdowns. On defense, Foreman made 43 tackles, two interceptions and caused two fumbles. Foreman has been selected to play in the All-American Bowl on June 25, 1994 in Allentown, Pa.

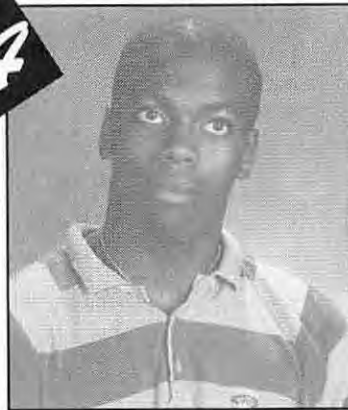
HS Head Coach Mike Grant: "Jay is a do everything kind of football player. We played him both ways and counted on him a great deal for our success. Jay was a big play running back for us and was our best player in the secondary."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Jay is very athletic with good height and is a player who could play on either side of the ball for us. I think he wants to start off on the defensive side of the ball, but he has great hands and athletic ability. He could make an excellent wingback also. He's such a good player that we will find a spot for him."

Why Nebraska: "I just felt that if I didn't play sports then I could live there. That's how comfortable I was with my visit. They have a great business school and their football program is tops."

Son of Chuck Foreman

'94



HEIGHT: 6-3
WEIGHT: 205
SPEED: 4.6
BENCH: 260
BIRTHDAY:
 July 24, 1976

SHELDON

JACKSON

Tight End

SCHOOL: Damien (Diamond Bar, Calif.)
HOBBIES: None
HONORS: Best in the West (Long Beach Press-Telegram).
OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (MVP 1991-92), Swimming (MVP 1991)
CHOSE NU OVER: Oklahoma, UCLA, Arizona

CAPSULE: A knee injury limited Jackson to just seven games this past season, but he still caught 18 passes for 238 yards and four touchdowns. His knee is fine now and he's back starting in basketball where he averages 10 points and 10 rebounds.

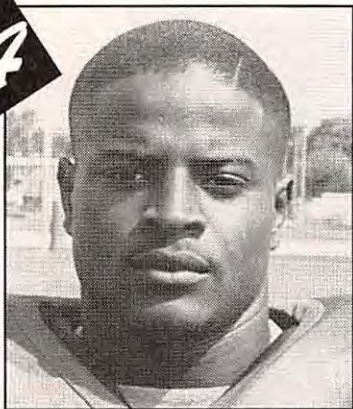
HS Head Coach Dick Larson: "Sheldon is going to be a great college tight end for Nebraska. He was hurt during the season, but was still good enough to be noticed by some of the top programs in the country. Sheldon has the great ability to get off the line of scrimmage and is almost impossible to cover by a strong safety or linebacker. He's working on his blocking and that will be there once he gets into that great weight room at Nebraska."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Sheldon has great size and will fill out and be a dominating tight end for us. He runs well and really could be another guy who could play on either side of the ball for us."

Why Nebraska: "I felt more comfortable at Nebraska during my visit. That just didn't happen at the other schools. Feeling comfortable was the main thing I was looking for in a program. I wanted a home away from home and that is what I feel Nebraska will give me."

Son of Frances Easton

'94



HEIGHT: 5-11
WEIGHT: 195
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 300
BIRTHDAY:
Nov. 12, 1972

BRIAN

KNUCKLES

I-Back

SCHOOL: Coffeyville Community College (Kan.)
HOBBIES: Bowling, Weightlifting
HONORS: First-team junior college All-American as a freshman and second team pick as a sophomore. Was named MVP of the Kansas Jayhawk Junior College League.
OTHER SPORTS: None
CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER: Kansas State

CAPSULE: Knuckles rushed for 3,087 yards over the last two years and averaged 6.11 yards per carry. He also had 37 touchdowns and a 140.3 yards per game average. Finished as the all-time leading rusher at Coffeyville breaking former Husker Mike Rozier's record. Rozier played one year at Coffeyville then went on to win the Heisman Trophy with the Huskers. Knuckles is the first Coffeyville player to sign with Nebraska since cornerback Bruce Pickens (1988).

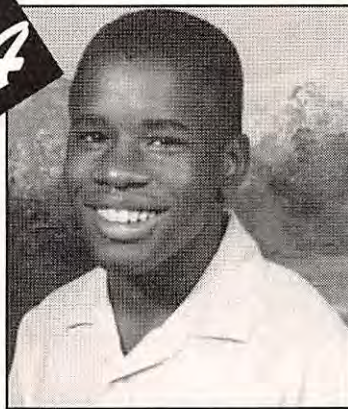
JUCO Head Coach Skip Foster: "Brian is the best running back that I have ever coached. He's a great power runner with excellent open field ability. Blessed with tremendous balance, Brian is very hard to knock off his feet and can just rip through people. I believe you are going to watch Brian Knuckles play in the NFL someday."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Brian is a great addition to our football team. We think he has the ability to have a great career here as an I-back and has an uncanny ability to stay on his feet. That's just one of his many attributes."

Why Nebraska: "Nebraska has always had a great tradition at I-back. I wanted to be a part of that tradition. They had success when they got Mike (Rozier) from Coffeyville. I'm going to try my best to be equally successful."

Son of James and Mary Knuckles

'94



HEIGHT: 6-0
WEIGHT: 180
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 240
BIRTHDAY:
Aug. 10, 1975

OCTAVIOUS

McFARLIN

Safety

SCHOOL: Bastrop (Bastrop, Texas)
HOBBIES: Fishing, Watching football on television, Going out
HONORS: All-Central Texas Team, two time all-district and was named to the Fabulous 55 squad which represents the top players in the state.
OTHER SPORTS: Track (district champion in the long and high jump), Basketball (all-district guard)
CHOSE NU OVER: Minnesota, Texas Christian

CAPSULE: After starting for three years, McFarlin led the state of Texas with 166 tackles (72 solo) as a senior. He also had five sacks, three fumble recoveries and one interception. McFarlin also shared some time at punter and averaged 39.1 yards per kick. In track, McFarlin was a 6-foot-10 high jumper, 23-8 long jumper and a 48-10 triple jumper.

HS Head Coach Les Johnson: "Octavious is like a linebacker playing free safety. That's how hard he hits. Because of the way he hits, he's able to make so many big plays and cause turnovers for you. He's also very good on special teams and is a threat every time he catches a punt for a return. He can really play and Nebraska fans are going to be very excited about this young man."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "The thing that strikes you the most about Octavious is his aggressiveness and physical play on the field. He is really a strong player and will play strong safety for us. He's a sure tackler who just seems to explode through the ball carrier."

Why Nebraska: "It was the best school for my academic needs. I also had the best time on my visit at Nebraska. That really sold me."

Son of Janie McFarlin

'94



HEIGHT: 5-10
WEIGHT: 175
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 220
BIRTHDAY:
 Sept. 21, 1976

DAVID
REDDICK

Wingback

SCHOOL: Woodrow Wilson (Camden, N.J.)
HOBBIES: Sports, Hanging around with friends
HONORS: All-South Jersey and second-team All-South (Philadelphia Inquirer).
OTHER SPORTS: Track
CHOSE NU OVER: Temple, Minnesota, Tennessee

CAPSULE: Reddick was a surprise signee in that there was not much talk about him prior to the end of January. He rushed for 61 times for 606 yards and 15 touchdowns as a senior. He also caught 15 passes for 196 yards. Reddick comes from the same high school that produced Mike Rozier. Teammate of Ramone Worthy (current Husker player) who played at Wilson in 1992.

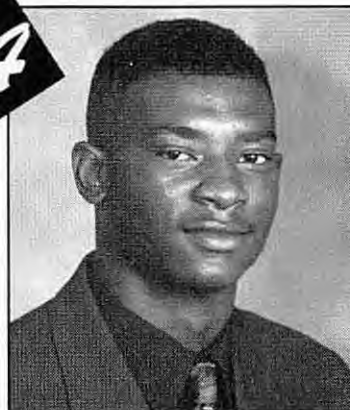
HS Head Coach Darrell Wilson: "David is a very versatile player who is an excellent receiver, but can play a big player role running the ball on the corner or out of the backfield. He has great hands, can really run after catching the ball and has a knack for finding the holes when running out of the backfield."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "David is an excellent athlete who can play on either side of the ball. He has quickness and speed that could enable him to play as a wingback or cornerback on defense."

Why Nebraska: "I just felt Nebraska had the best opportunity for me. I love their football program and academic setup. I just felt it was the best place for me and I could spend my next four or five years there."

Son of Charles and Margaret Reddick

'94



HEIGHT: 6-4
WEIGHT: 220
SPEED: 4.6
BENCH: 300
BIRTHDAY:
 April 2, 1975

DORRICK
ROY

Tight End

SCHOOL: Montclair Prep (Inglewood, Calif.)
HOBBIES: Fishing, Weight lifting
HONORS: All-American (Super Prep), Best of the West (Long Beach Press-Telegram), All-CIF, All-San Fernando Valley and All-Alpha League.
OTHER SPORTS: None
CHOSE NU OVER: Michigan, Texas, Colorado, Miami

CAPSULE: As a standout tight end, Roy caught 27 passes for 500 yards and three touchdowns as a senior. Art Monk, the NFL's all-time leading reception leader with the Washington Redskins and ex-Phoenix Cardinal receiver Roy Green are second cousins to Roy. His brother, Donovan, just completed his sophomore season as an offensive lineman at the University of New Mexico.

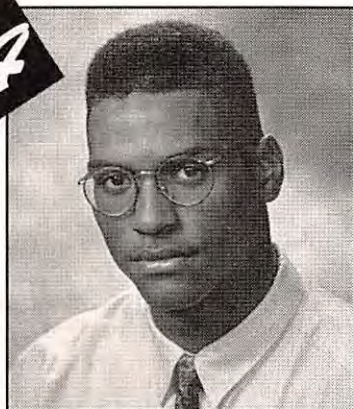
HS Head Coach John Hazelton: "Dorrick is the total package at tight end. We ran 80 percent of our plays behind Dorrick and he just blew people off the ball. He's a perfect fit at Nebraska with what they are doing with their tight end on offense. Dorrick is the fastest big, skill guy I have ever been around at any place I've coached."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Dorrick is a guy that could play on either side of the ball. The most impressive thing about him is that he can really run for a big man. He's probably 6-5 right now and he will weigh around 240 in a year or so. Dorrick, right now, runs a legit 4.55 to 4.6 handheld 40-yard time. So, he's a very talented athlete that we are excited about."

Why Nebraska: "I liked the coaching staff and I can play early. They graduated two tight ends and that will give me a good opportunity to get some playing time as a freshman."

Son of Lennie Roy

'94



HEIGHT: 6-6
WEIGHT: 225
SPEED: 4.7
BENCH: 280
BIRTHDAY:
 Feb. 28, 1975

MIKE

RUCKER

Outside Linebacker

SCHOOL: Benton (St. Joseph, Mo.)

HOBBIES: The outdoors

HONORS: First-team all-state

OTHER SPORTS: Track (shot put with a personal best of 53 feet)

CHOSE NU OVER: Missouri

CAPSULE: Rucker starred on both sides of the ball and hauled in 400 yards in receptions at tight end. On the defensive side of the ball, he made 145 stops. Helped lead his team to a 28-8 three-year record.

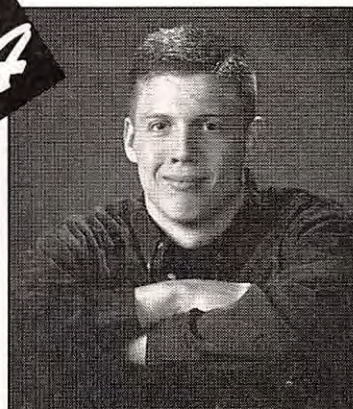
HS Head Coach Don Tabor: "Mike was a great player for us on both sides of the ball. He has great size, yet moves well which put us in great position to really rush the passer. Mike is very tough to throw over and has great hands as a tight end. He's a great target at tight end and always seems to have the ability to get open."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Here is a guy that did not get recruited much and wasn't rated that high by the so-called recruiting experts. But when you look at film, and I have looked at film of all the great players across the country, this guy is as good as there is. Mike has great height, size, speed and aggressiveness. He's going to be an excellent player for us."

Why Nebraska: "Nebraska just offers the best opportunity for me. On my visit it was easy to realize the quality program that the Huskers have. It was really an easy decision to choose to play there."

Son of Martin and LaVell Rucker

'94



HEIGHT: 6-4
WEIGHT: 220
SPEED: 4.7
BENCH: 290
BIRTHDAY:
 Nov. 12, 1975

TRAVIS

TOLINE

Outside Linebacker

SCHOOL: Wahoo (Wahoo, Neb.)

HOBBIES: Sports

HONORS: First-team all-classes and all-state (Lincoln Journal-Star and Omaha World).

OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (three-year starter for the defending Class B state champions), Track (6-foot-4 high jumper)

CHOSE NU OVER: None

CAPSULE: Toline was the first prep player to commit to the Huskers. Played offensive guard and defensive end. He managed 78 tackles (50 solo) in eight games as a senior including six sacks, seven tackles for loss, two fumble recoveries, one safety and returned an interception for a touchdown. He also handled the deep snap duties. A member of the National Honor Society, president of the student council and an officer of the Wahoo Lettermen's Club, Toline scored a remarkable 29 on his ACT.

HS Head Coach Dick Tinglehoff: "Travis is one athlete that I know can compete at the major college level despite playing for a small high school program. He is a fantastic athlete who excels at three sports and has all the skills necessary to be a great outside linebacker."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Travis plays for a very good program at Wahoo. He's a very well-rounded athlete who will be a very good rush end for us."

Why Nebraska: "Nebraska was the only school I wanted to play for from Day One. When you grow up in Nebraska, you want to be a Cornhusker. So this is a dream for me."

Son of George and Mary Toline

For more recruiting capsules see page 30

Eric Piatkowski still has fun playing basketball. When the day the game he has played for about as long as he can remember ceases to be fun, he'll walk away from it.

Basketball requires too much hard work and dedication for it not to be fun, Piatkowski said.

"It's been good to me so far, but I don't want to do something if I'm not having fun at it," he said.

Until a two-game slump early in the Big Eight portion of Nebraska's schedule, "I was probably having more fun than I've ever had," said the senior from Rapid City, S.D.

"When you lose a couple of games and you're not playing well, there's all that pressure."

But even the pressure can be dealt with if the game is fun. He's never grown tired of basketball.

"I've never gotten to that point, not at all," Piatkowski said.

The game isn't as easy as those with his rare ability make it seem. He's among the best basketball players ever to wear a Cornhusker uniform. Barring the unforeseen, he will rank no lower than third on Nebraska's career scoring list. And there is talk of his career continuing in the NBA.

Such talk is by others, not Piatkowski, who gets a little irritable when the subject comes up.

Not that he wouldn't like to play professionally, as his father Walt did, for four years in the American Basketball Association. As a youngster, "I saw him play, and I wanted to be like him," Piatkowski said.

But his admiration for his dad also gave him an appreciation for the NBA and its players. "Those are the best players in the world," he said. "I'm just trying to finish college right now. I don't know what's going to happen. It's a dream, certainly."

"But so many people set their goals on something like that and then they don't make it, and everyone wants to know why. Some of it is being in the right place at the right time."

One right place is the first round of the NBA's annual draft, certainly, but with the league's salary cap, even that is no guarantee for anyone except a lottery pick.

No less an authority than Marty Blake, the director of scouting for the NBA, has said Piatkowski has a good chance to make it professionally. And Piatkowski qualifies for the disability insurance approved by the NCAA for exceptional student-ath-

STILL PLAYING THE GAME FOR FUN

*Eric Piatkowski, a
pure scorer who is
projected as a
potential first-round
NBA pick, has
channeled the fun of
the game into a stellar
senior season*

BY MIKE BARCOCK

letes.

To qualify for the program, a basketball player must be projected as a potential first-round NBA draft pick.

Whether or not Piatkowski ends up being drafted, by a team that can provide him a realistic opportunity to earn a job, remains to be seen. But there is little doubt he has the skills to succeed in the NBA.

Florida A&M Coach Ron Brown compared Piatkowski to former Phoenix Suns player Tom Chambers. Texas Coach Tom Penders said "this kid is for real" after Piatkowski scored 35 points and grabbed 10 rebounds against the Longhorns early in the season.

Cornhusker Coach Danny Nee compares the 6-foot-7 Piatkowski to the best players with whom he has worked, among them Bill Laimbeer, Orlando Woolridge and John Paxson.

Piatkowski is talented, and he has improved every year, according to Nee, who was impressed the first time he watched Piatkowski as a high school player in Rapid City, S.D.

Piatkowski was chosen as South Dakota's "Mr. Basketball" in 1989, following his senior season at Stevens High. He led his team to the state's Class AA championship, averaging 25.6 points, 10.3 rebounds and 3.3 assists. He set the state's Class AA single-game scoring record with a 51-point effort and received every significant Player of the Year award for the state.

Recruiting analyst Van Coleman described Piatkowski as a "blue-collar outside stroker who can drill it from three-point land. He has good skills with the ball, plus, he'll work his buns off, too," Coleman wrote.

Such predictions during recruiting often prove to be without merit. But not in this case.

Piatkowski took a recruiting visit to Minnesota and canceled one to Southern Methodist before signing a letter of intent with Nebraska during the NCAA's early-signing period. Two other high school players signed at the same time — Bruce Chubick and Jamie Cole, a guard from Grand Rapids, Mich., who suffered a knee injury and never played for the Cornhuskers.

Chubick and Piatkowski have gone through together, redshirting as freshmen in 1989-90. The first year was difficult, and not just because he wasn't playing, Piatkowski said. The team finished only 10-18.

"When I first got here, I was all



proud," he once told the Lincoln Journal-Star. "Yeah, I play on the basketball team."

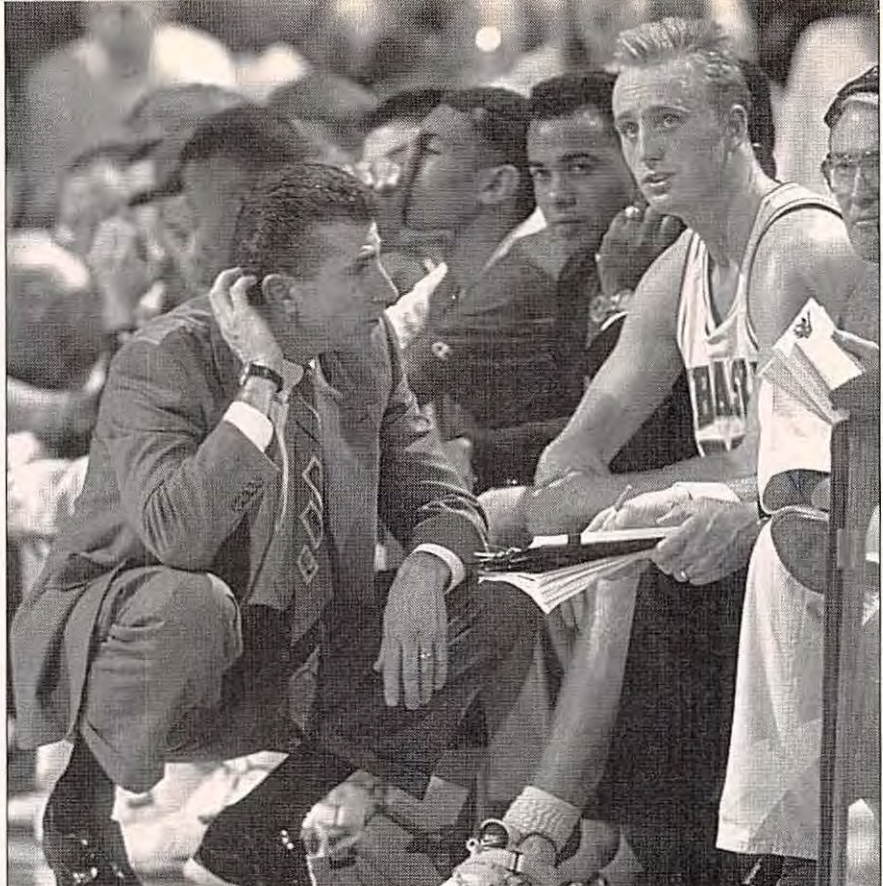
"Halfway through the season, I didn't want people to know — 10-18? People would sit around and laugh at us. Besides beating Colorado in the Big Eight, we beat Kansas State here. And the guys were practically crying in the locker room they were so excited that they had actually beaten a Big Eight team other than Colorado."

By the end of that season, "I was really scared," he said.

A year later, he averaged 10.9 points per game coming off the bench for the winningest team in school history (26-8) and the second ever to qualify for the NCAA Tournament. He played a key role in a season that changed the focus of the program, moving it to the next level.

After his first season of competition, Piatkowski was regarded as a key to future success. After his second season, 1991-92, he was again facing a reserve's role.

"After my sophomore year, the coaches were kind of down on me," Piatkowski said. Going into the sea-



Doug Devoe

Danny Nee (left) compares Piatkowski (right) to the best players with whom he has worked, among them Bill Laimbeer, Orlando Woolridge and John Paxson.

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son, Nee had told him if he had the ability to be second-team all-conference.

But "I didn't make second team," said Piatkowski, who struggled because he tried to do too much.

He led the Cornhuskers and ranked No. 11 in the Big Eight in scoring, averaging 14.3 points. But the Cornhuskers' second consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance was a bittersweet end to a bittersweet season.

After the season, Nebraska played an exhibition tour in Europe and Piatkowski began to pull his game together. Last season, he again proved what everyone knew when he arrived: His talent for the game is special.

As a junior, Piatkowski became the first Cornhusker since Dave Hoppen to be named first-team all-conference. Determined to avoid a letdown similar to the one his sophomore season, he worked hard over the summer, playing on the United States' gold medal team at the World University Games.

"The summer is when you really

"So many people set their goals on something like that (NBA) and then they don't make it, and everyone wants to know why. Some of it is being in the right place at the right time."

Eric Piatkowski

improve your game," Piatkowski said. He's had that attitude since junior high, when he became a regular at summer basketball camps.

He was a multi-sport athlete in high school, competing in cross country and track and field as well as basketball in high school. He played on the tennis team as a ninth-grader, qualifying for the state tournament on a doubles team. "That was the last time I had an opportunity to play tennis (organized)," he said.

Everything he did was based on preparing for basketball. That's why he ran cross country, he said. "I'm not a long distance runner, by any means."

Piatkowski has developed in all areas of the game. He plays defense;

he rebounds, pulling down 14 in a game against Colorado this season; he passes and he provides leadership. But what Nebraska fans probably will remember most is his scoring, in particular from beyond the three-point line.

Piatkowski definitely has NBA range as a shooter.

Not surprisingly, that skill was shaped by his father, who "always stressed fundamentals. He wanted me to get the fundamentals, from the start. Then it was up to me."

Walt Piatkowski provided his next-to-oldest son a role model, as a shooter as well as a person. It was a standoff when they played H-O-R-S-E in the driveway at home, Eric said.

"He (his dad) was one of the greatest shooters I've ever seen."

Eric is one of the greatest shooters Cornhusker fans have had an opportunity to see. Nee recently said something to that effect, but quickly correcting himself. Not shooter; a more accurate term is "scorer."

That ability could earn Piatkowski a living before too long. If the fun doesn't go out of it. ■

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STRICTLY

Erick Strickland created a little controversy on campus when he talked about possibly trying out for the Nebraska football team before he completes his collegiate eligibility.

Football remains a possibility, Strickland said recently.

"But if basketball comes through, it's going to be postponed. I'll just leave it open."

Such talk from anyone but Strickland would seem nothing more than ego-gratification. But the sophomore from Bellevue, Neb., is serious. He also has the athletic ability to do it.

The 6-foot-3, 210-pound Strickland is among the most versatile athletes ever to compete at Nebraska.

He has spent the last two summers playing minor league baseball for the Florida Marlins. *Baseball America* recently listed him among the Marlins' top young prospects. The newspaper said Strickland could develop into a middle-of-the-order, power-hitting outfielder, if he were to focus his attention on baseball.

Strickland hit .267 with 23 RBI and 11 stolen bases in the Florida Rookie League his first summer, then followed by hitting .263 with four home runs, 12 doubles, three triples, eight stolen bases and 36 RBI for Elmira, N.Y., in the New York-Penn League last summer.

Some have suggested he might be able to play basketball professionally, if he were to focus on that.

Strickland, the Big Eight's "Freshman of the Year" according to both the Associated Press and the conference coaches last season, isn't ready to choose, however.

In fact, as the football talk indicates, he might add a third sport to an already busy schedule before settling on a single sport.

"There's nothing like it, doing what you want to do," he said.

If it were up to his father Matthew Strickland, an Air Force officer, he probably would be playing football now. Football was his father's first choice, he said. "He especially wanted me to play football."

He was an all-state football wide receiver as a sophomore and junior at Bellevue West High

School but didn't play his senior year, not only because of a shoulder injury but also because he wanted to concentrate on basketball.

Nebraska was among the schools that showed recruiting interest in him as a football player. Even though it's been three years since he played football, Strickland is convinced he could still compete at that level.

"If I was to play now, I'd be 20 or 21 (years old), so physically, I'd be where I want to be," he said.

"Growing up, football was it. But when I got injured, that put a different perspective on it."

Strickland became more interested in basketball, if for no other reason than "I have more fun playing basketball," he said.

He was a two-time Super-State selection in basketball, averaging 26.3 points per game as a senior to become the second-leading career scorer in Nebraska Class A history.

Despite his success in basketball, giving up football was difficult. "It was tough being projected as one of the top 10 (high school) receivers in the nation and thinking of the prestigious schools you could've gone

to (for football)."

He hit .483 in baseball as a high school senior, and, for good measure, high jumped 6-foot-6.

Baseball is probably the best career choice, although "it doesn't seem that baseball is working out as well," Strickland said.

Pro basketball is a longshot because "they're looking for 6-foot-8 point guards with the abilities I have. They want bigger guys," he said.

If he were to continue playing basketball after college, he'd probably have to do it the way the New York Knicks' John Starks did, spend a season or two in the CBA before earning a chance with an NBA team.

Cornhusker Coach Danny Nee said, "'You're welcome to play football,'" said Strickland, who is a basketball walk-on because the Marlins are paying his school costs.

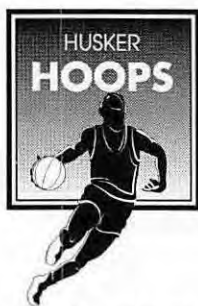
"It all depends on what the other sports are talking. Football is definitely a possibility, though."

In the mean time, he'll divide his skills between basketball and baseball. "If I could do this forever, I'd do it," Strickland said. ■

"Growing up, football was it. But when I got injured, that put a different perspective on it."

Erick Strickland

HOOOPS



UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

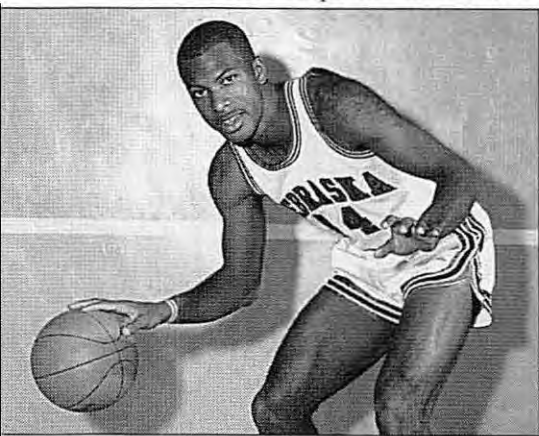
Nebraska has lived and died, offensively, with three-point shooting this season. When the Corn-huskers went through a three-point shooting slump early in Big Eight play, Nee was asked if he might back off the 3's.

"If that's creeping into your pens, forget it. We're going to shoot them. De-emphasize 3's? That would be like a doctor stopping (practice) because a patient died."

HALL OF FAME GROWS

The sixth set of inductees into the Nebraska Basketball Hall of Fame were honored during halftime of the Oklahoma game on Jan. 29.

This year's class included: Bob Cerv, who played on the Cornhuskers' Big Seven championship teams in 1949 and 1950; Tom Russell, who scored 712 points in two sea-

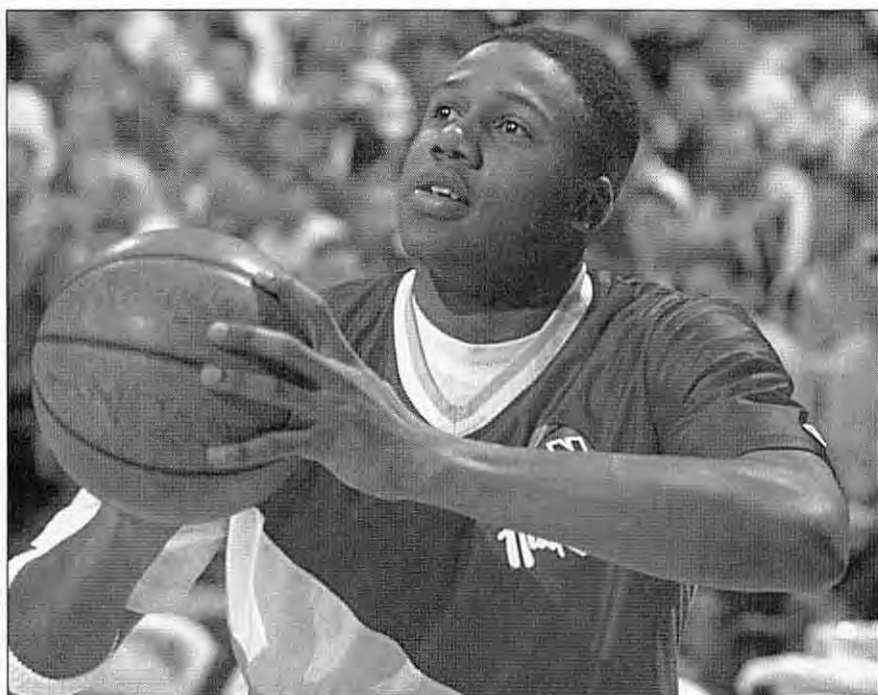


Andre Smith (above), Nebraska's last Big Eight Player of the Year, was one of four selected to NU's Hall of Fame this year.

sons in the early 1960s; Nate Branch, who ranks 19th on Nebraska's career scoring list; and Andre Smith, the last Cornhusker to be named Big Eight Player of the Year.

Smith, a two-time first-team all-conference selection was chosen the league's outstanding player in 1981. He ranks third on the Cornhusker career scoring list, with 1,717 points.

In addition, George Sullivan, Nebraska's veteran trainer and phys-



Doug Devore

ical therapist, received the Hall of Fame's Special Merit Award.

The Hall of Fame, in its sixth year of existence, is co-sponsored by the athletic department and the Rebounders booster club.

Previous inductees (with the year of their induction):

1989 — James Buchanan, Sam Carrier, Steve Hokuf, Chuck Jura, Stu Lantz, Don Maclay, Robert Parsons, Claude Retherford, Mutt Volz, George Wahlquist, Coach Harry Good.

1990 — Herschell Turner, Bus Whitehead, Coach Joe Cipriano.

1991 — Leroy Chalk, Jerry Fort, Coach Jerry Bush.

1992 — Sid Held, Rex Ekwall, Marvin Stewart, Coach W.H. Browne.

1993 — Bob Pierce, Grant Simmons, Jack Moore.

BADGETT PLAYING BIGGER

Danny Nee on 6-6 sophomore Terrance Badgett, after he pulled down 10 rebounds in an 89-73 loss against Missouri: "He rebounds like a guy 6-9. The only thing I'm concerned about with Terrance is his endurance."

Badgett has been diagnosed as suffering from a form of asthma.

Although Badgett typically has come off the bench, "I feel like he's a starter," Nee said.

BECK'S DECISION WORKS

Husker women's Coach

Sophomore Terrance Badgett has been playing big averaging nearly 10 rebounds a game coming off the bench.

Angela Beck considered taking senior Nafeesah Brown out of the starting lineup after she struggled in a game against Colorado. Brown, the team's leading scorer, was held to a career-low six points in the 81-55 loss.

Brown had scored in double figures in 26 consecutive games.

Beck relented, however, and Brown responded with a career-high 32 points in a 84-71 victory against Missouri in Columbia, Mo.

Barring something unforeseen, Brown could finish as the most prolific scorer among junior college transfers in Nebraska history. No. 1 on the list currently is Diane DelVigna.

Husker senior Meggan Yedsena would have to pick up her scoring some to finish in the career



Nafeesah Brown (above) scored 32 points after Coach Angela Beck (left) toyed with the idea of benching the senior.





MEN'S BASKETBALL RECORD: 14-6

Nov. 27	Texas-San Antonio	W	96-85
Nov. 28	Texas	L	75-78
Dec. 1	@Appalachian St.	L	81-92

Ameritas Classic (#)

Dec. 3	#vs. Ohio	W	96-68
Dec. 4	#vs. Portland	W	111-85
Dec. 9	@Creighton	W	67-53
Dec. 11	Wichita St.	W	94-72
Dec. 18	@Michigan St.	W	85-81
Dec. 20	Florida A&M	W	86-61
Dec. 31	Northern Iowa	W	70-63
Jan. 3	@Iowa St.	W	78-72
Jan. 5	Southern Utah	W	89-85
Jan. 8	Colorado	W	106-67
Jan. 15	Missouri-K. City	W	92-71
Jan. 19	@Colorado	L	81-86
Jan. 24	Missouri	L	73-89
Jan. 29	Oklahoma	L	76-79
Feb. 6	@Kansas	L	87-94
Feb. 9	@Kansas St.	W	76-68
Feb. 12	Iowa St.	W	102-96
Feb. 14	@Oklahoma		
Feb. 19	@Oklahoma St.		
Feb. 23	Kansas		
Feb. 26	Kansas St.		
Mar. 2	Oklahoma St.		
Mar. 5	@Missouri		

Big Eight Tournament - Kansas City, Mo.

Mar. 11

scoring Top 10, though barring injury, she will easily surpass 1,000 career points.

Women's basketball in the Big Eight is definitely on the upswing, according to Beck. "I don't think the Big Eight has ever been any tougher than it is this year," she said.

"People used to laugh when you'd put a Big Eight team No. 1 (in the national rankings)."

USA Today, which conducts a women's poll, once removed her from the voting list because she rated a Big Eight team first, Beck said.

"Unfortunately, it's happening in a year we're not at that level."

Midway through the conference regular season, the Huskers were faced with having to finish strong, and probably reach the championship game of the Big Eight Tournament in Salina, Kan., just to be considered for a return trip to the NCAA Tournament.

Women's assistant coach Amy (Bullock) Kramer was among the Nebraska alums who participated in the third Husker alumni game on Jan. 30.

Among the others, who played or coached in the game, were: Amy Stephens (1985-89), Kelli (Benson) Jeffries (1980-85), Chris (Leigh) Thomas (1979-83), Jeanne Boller (1976-78), Renee Chenney (1978), Kathy Branchaud (1973) and Barb Conrad-Koperski (1979). ■

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'94



HEIGHT: 6-3
WEIGHT: 275
SPEED: 5.1
BENCH: 330
BIRTHDAY:
 Sept. 30, 1975

BRANDT

WADE

Offensive Lineman

SCHOOL: Platteview (Springfield, Neb.)

HOBBIES: Hunting, Fishing, Golf

HONORS: All-class and all-state (Lincoln Journal-Star and Omaha World).

OTHER SPORTS: Wrestling (top ranked heavy-weight in Class B and posted a 24-0 record (19 pins) after finishing second in state last year), Golf (earned 11 letters and was a two-time state qualifier)

CHOSE NU OVER: None

CAPSULE: Wade is the first player from Platteview to earn a scholarship at Nebraska and only the second player to earn a Division-I offer. A 4.0 student and member of the National Honor Society, Wade also excelled on the field recording 72 tackles, including six sacks, two fumble recoveries and forced four fumbles.

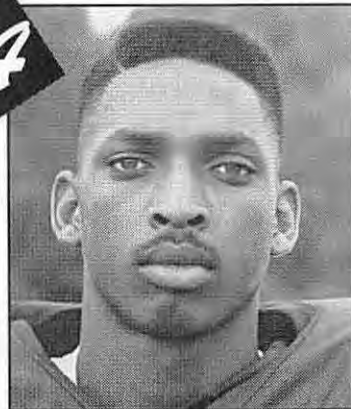
HS Head Coach Dennis Mahaney: "Brandt's make up is what makes him so good up-front. He's got great physical talent, but he's always thinking up there, making the proper decision. A very physical player, he is quick to dominate on the wrestling mat. He's a great athlete who plays very well for our golf team."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Brandt will play either offensive guard or tackle for us. He's a guy who is only going to get better. He has pretty good strength and runs well. Brandt will really fit in well with our offensive scheme."

Why Nebraska: "Once Nebraska offered, it was too impressive to pass up. That was the program I always wanted to attend. I tried to keep an open mind during the recruiting period, but when you grow up in Nebraska it's hard not to lean their direction."

Son of Larry and Christine Wade

'94



HEIGHT: 6-1
WEIGHT: 175
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 280
BIRTHDAY:
 March 3, 1976

ERIC

WARFIELD

Split End/Safety

SCHOOL: Arkansas (Texarkana, Ark.)

HOBBIES: Sports

HONORS: All-state and all-conference (twice).

OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (leading rebounder and scorer), Track (won the state title in the high jump with a 6-foot-8 mark)

CHOSE NU OVER: Arkansas, NE Louisiana

CAPSULE: Warfield is believed to be the first scholarship player ever to sign with Nebraska from Arkansas. Warfield is a touchdown waiting to happen as during one two-week period, he touched the ball eight times and scored seven touchdowns. On defense, he made 47 tackles, picked off seven passes, blocked one punt and caused three fumbles. As a receiver, he managed 12 catches for 312 yards and eight touchdowns.

HS Head Coach Johnny Toombs: "Eric is a better football player than an athlete and that is saying something. He is one of the best athletes I have ever coached. He excels in track with very little work. He's explosive on the offensive side of the ball, I just don't see how he won't play well in college. Eric has a chance to score every time he touches the ball."

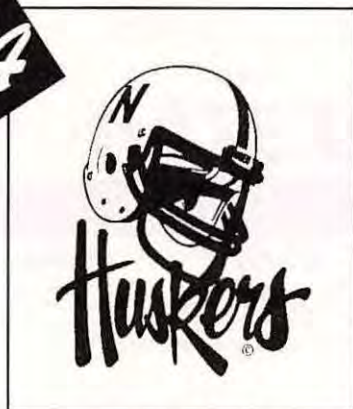
Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie:

"Warfield is a great athlete who is a tremendous basketball player and track man. He can do it all, play on either side of the ball, catch the ball well and be very aggressive on defense. He should be an outstanding player for us."

Why Nebraska: "I just liked the overall program. The coaches, players and people were great. I just liked everything about it. I had a great visit and I loved the community because the people were so nice. There seems to be peace in the community."

Son of Rose Warfield

'94



HEIGHT: 5-11
WEIGHT: 170
SPEED: 4.5
BENCH: 230
BIRTHDAY:
Sept. 27, 1974

SHEVIN

WIGGINS

Cornerback/Wingback

SCHOOL: Manatee (Palmetto, Fla.)

HOBBIES: Sports

HONORS: Named "Mr. Florida" and the Florida Offensive Player of the Year.

OTHER SPORTS: Basketball

CHOSE NU OVER: Western Kentucky

CAPSULE: Wiggins played running back, wide receiver and kick returner for Manatee. He is the fourth athlete from Manatee to play at Nebraska following Tommie Frazier, Tyrone Williams and Justin Stephens. Wiggins rushed for 2,267 yards and 32 touchdowns this past season and set a single season record for career rushing touchdowns. He averaged 150 yards in five playoff games as Manatee advanced to the championship game in Florida's largest class. Grades could be a problem.

HS Head Coach Joe Kinnan: "Shevin is one of the best skill position talents in the country. Defenses had to respect him so much that he drew double coverage all the time. Teams would kick away from him. On defense he played center field for us at free safety and just flat out shutdown our opponents."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "As a running back last year, he was one of the best in the country. Blessed with great acceleration, he could be a wingback at Nebraska or a great cornerback. He has all the tools to be a great player for us."

Why Nebraska: "I felt very comfortable with the environment and enjoyed dealing with the coaches."

Son of Ronnie and Thomasena Johnson

'94



HEIGHT: 6-4
WEIGHT: 280
SPEED: 4.9
BENCH: 340
BIRTHDAY:
Nov. 23, 1976

JASON

WILTZ

Defensive Tackle

SCHOOL: St. Augustine (New Orleans, La.)

HOBBIES: Fishing

HONORS: All-America (Super Prep), all-state, named MVP in district and honorable mention All-American (USA Today).

OTHER SPORTS: Baseball (first base and pitcher)

CHOSE NU OVER: Texas A&M, Colorado, Texas, LSU, North Carolina

CAPSULE: Wiltz was credited with 76 tackles, 12 sacks and 11 tackles for losses as a senior. He comes from the same high school as ex-Huskers David White (1989-92), Tyrone Hughes (1989-92) and Vincent Hawkins (1990-92).

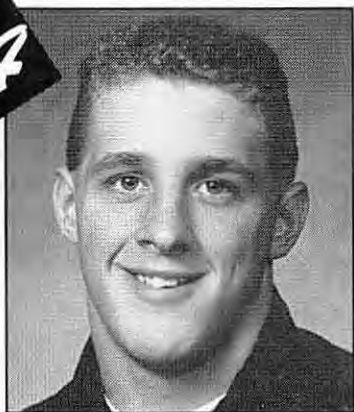
HS Head Coach Tony Biagas: "Jason is the best defensive lineman we've ever had here. He plays with a mean temperament and is just too much for any high school lineman to handle. Nebraska has signed a great one. I promise."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Without question, Jason is one of the top two or three defensive linemen in the country. He has great explosiveness and leg strength. He can also accelerate to the ball well. He should be an impact player for us."

Why Nebraska: "I liked the academic system and tutorial system. Coach Tom Osborne seemed to get along great with the players who were already there. That was really the best selling point for me."

Son of Stanley and Brenda Wiltz

'94



HEIGHT: 6-5
WEIGHT: 230
SPEED: 4.6
BENCH: 320
BIRTHDAY:
 July 3, 1976

GRANT WISTROM

Outside Linebacker

SCHOOL: Webb City (Webb City, Mo.)

HOBBIES: None

HONORS: First-team All-American (USA Today and Super Prep), Defensive Player of the Year for the Midlands Region and was rated as the top state player by every Missouri newspaper.

OTHER SPORTS: Basketball (center), Track

CHOSE NU OVER: Michigan, Stanford, Miami, Oklahoma

CAPSULE: Scored a 28 on his ACT and carried a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. On the field, Wistrom made 122 tackles (eight sacks) caused nine fumbles, made six recoveries and blocked one punt as a senior. At tight end he caught 30 passes for 527 yards and five touchdowns. He also rushed the ball 11 times for 115 yards and three scores last year.

HS Head Coach Kurt Thompson: "Grant comes with the complete package. He's an excellent student and leader first and foremost. He's also a dominant athlete who just whips people on the field. He just won't quit and has so much ability that he literally takes over a game."

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Grant is a very talented player, an excellent student and should play a big role for our football program over the next few years. He should be an outside rusher and has all the tools to step in and be that kind of guy early."

Why Nebraska: "Their coaching staff was really the main difference in the fact that all the players and people feel as if they are at home in that program. Nebraska's 4-3 defensive scheme is what I am best suited for. The coaches seemed to be great to play for."

Son of Ron and Kathy Wistrom

OTHERS RECEIVING SCHOLARSHIPS

'94

DARIN

ERSTAD

Punter/Placekicker

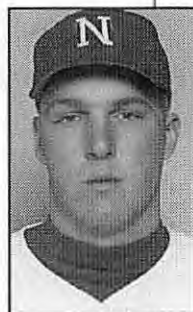
HEIGHT: 6-2 **WEIGHT:** 195 **SPEED:** 4.6
BENCH: 260 **BIRTHDAY:** June 6, 1974

SCHOOL: Jamestown (Jamestown, N.D.)

HOBBIES: None

HONORS: Selected as the 1992 Associated Press North Dakota Athlete of the Year. Named to first-team all-state teams on eight different occasions.

CAPSULE: Erstad came to Nebraska on a baseball scholarship where he started every game for the Huskers last year. He hit .339 with 10 homers, 16 doubles and 52 RBI. He's a preseason All-American this season and has three years of baseball eligibility remaining. In high school, Erstad averaged 42 yards a punt and hit a school record 50 yard field goal and was 7-of-10 on the season. Erstad also made the 1996 USA Olympic Development Team.



Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "Darin hasn't done a lot of kicking lately, but he has a very strong leg. He's somewhat raw but has great leg strength as a punter and place kicker. In fact, he may have the strongest leg we have ever had here."

Son of Chuck and Dorthy Erstad

JOHN

LIVINGSTON

Wide Receiver

HEIGHT: 6-0 **WEIGHT:** 175 **SPEED:** 4.5
BENCH: 240 **BIRTHDAY:** Aug. 2, 1973

SCHOOL: Palomar CC (San Marcos, Calif.)

HOBBIES: Sports

HONORS: All-league and All-CIF in high school.

CAPSULE: Transfers to Nebraska from Arizona State and can participate in spring ball. Before his one year at ASU, he played a year at Palomar Community College and caught 55 passes for nearly 1,000 yards and 11 touchdowns. He also ran back three punts for touchdowns while helping Palomar to the national championship in 1991.

Recruiting Coordinator Dave Gillespie: "John has great hands and catches the ball extremely well. He has great quickness and acceleration. I believe he can help us immediately."

Son of Fredrick and Samieh Labib-Wood



Yahoo From Wahoo

With the football season over and nothing to think about but school work and warmer weather, the football players turn to various sources for weekend entertainment.

Some play Nintendo while other gorge themselves with pizza. Others go the movies and some go home to watch their old high school teams play basketball.

Lucky for Matt Turman, a Wahoo native and backup quarterback that he chose the latter during the final weekend in January. Turman was picked at random to shoot a series of progressively longer shots at halftime of a Wahoo game. A local car dealer had promised a new car if the shooter could make a three-quarter court shot. A prize worth \$13,000.

In preparation Turman easily made a layup. Then, by all accounts, he air-balled the free throw. Perhaps Turman had spent a little too much time in Boyd Epley's weight program.

There are conflicting reports regarding Turman's half-court attempt. Some say he drew rim, others say it was another air ball. At that point Turman had lost much of the crowd. Many had turned away to talk or went to get a refreshment.

Turman walked back to the far free-throw line and paused for a moment to eye the basket at the other end. The previous shots had been attempted with two hands, basketball style. This shot could only be attempted using a throwing motion.

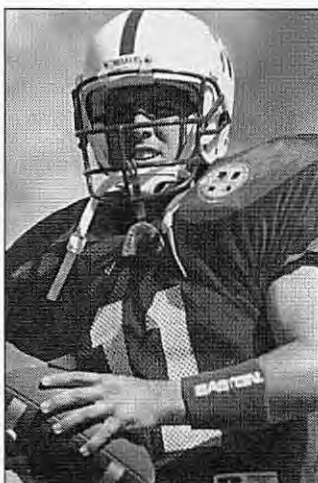
He had been performing that motion repeatedly, and with great accuracy, for the past year. Anyone who has seen Turman throw in practice, scrimmage or in games, knows that he throws the football between the numbers.

Turman reached back and released the ball over his shoulder, eyes focused and head still. Two seconds later, the net jumped and a brief moment of stunned silence was followed by a burst of pandemonium.

Gazing in disbelief, Turman began jumping around. He raced around the gym giving high fives and laughing.

The people of Wahoo are used to seeing good basketball, but never had they seen such a halftime shot. Neither had the car dealer.

Turman has since come back to earth and is checking with the NCAA to make sure he can keep the car without jeopardizing his eligibility. ■



Matt Turman's (above) arm strength hasn't won him a game at Nebraska yet, but it has won him a new car.

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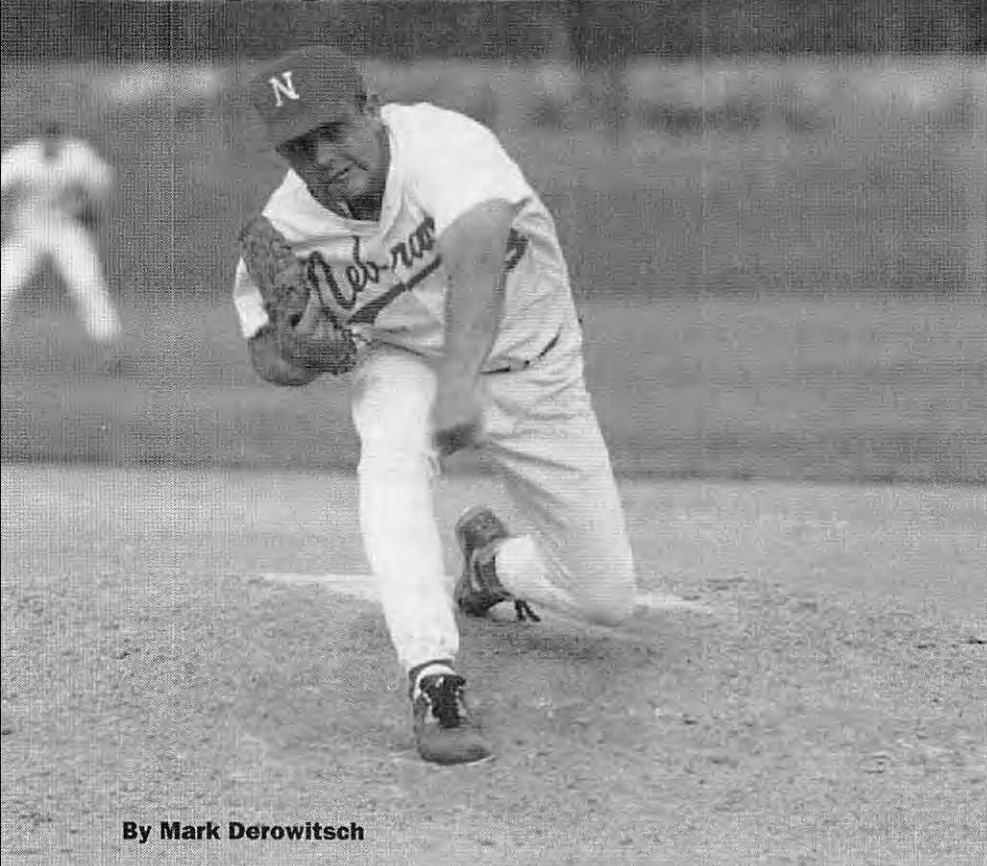
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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS



By Mark Derowitsch

Nebraska baseball Coach John Sanders can't wait for the season to start. With six starters back from a team that won 23 of its last 30 games a year ago, it's no wonder he's eager to get going.

How good could the Huskers be?

Sanders started talking about making the NCAA field shortly after the Huskers ended last year.

"Last year ended too soon for us," he said. "By the end of the year, we felt we were playing well enough to make the regionals. The key phrase this year is taking care of unfinished business. The players feel that way too."

Collegiate Baseball shares Sanders' optimism. The magazine ranked the Huskers No. 35 in its preseason poll.

Sanders' has good reason to be optimistic heading into the 1994 season. Actually, he has a few good rea-

If junior Troy Brohawn (above) can put together the same record-breaking numbers he managed last year, Coach John Sanders (right) could have plenty to smile about in 1994.

sons.

The biggest reason is probably All-America pitcher Troy Brohawn. A year ago, Brohawn went 13-0, struck out 123 batters in 111 innings and had nine complete games (all school records). He ranked third in the Big Eight Conference in earned-run average (3.16) and was 18th nationally in strikeouts per nine innings (9.97).

Against the Big Eight, Brohawn was 8-0 (a school record) with five complete games.

But Brohawn wasn't limited to the mound. Last year, he batted .329,

third best on the team, and drove in 34 runs. When he's not pitching this year, Brohawn is expected to see action at first base.

"Troy kept us going during the tough times last year," Sanders said. "He held the team together with his solid pitching all season."

The Huskers return preseason All-America player of a year ago in sophomore outfielder Darin Erstad. In earning Freshman All-America honors last year, Erstad hit .339, drove in 54 runs and hit 10 home runs.

Erstad, a left fielder, was named to the 1996 U.S. Olympic Development team and recently announced that he will accept a scholarship to play football, as well as baseball, at Nebraska.

"Darin put up some real impressive numbers last year, and there's no reason to think he won't get better," Sanders said. "He has the potential to be a star in this league."

Erstad is joined by what Sanders calls a solid group in the outfield.

Junior Jed Dalton, who missed 22 games last year with an injured shoulder, batted .339, had nine doubles and 26 RBI while playing in just 36 games.

Dalton, a center fielder, was a member of *Baseball America's* 1992 Freshman All-American team.



The task of trying to replace All-American Marc Sagmoen goes to freshman Chris Hesse. Hesse won the starting right field job, and gives the Huskers a proven stolen base threat in the lineup (he swiped 177 bases during his tenure at Millard North High in Omaha). Junior College transfer David Gonzalez and freshman Jeff Strasser are the back-ups in the outfield.

"We have a real solid group in the outfield," Sanders said.

Three starters in the infield return, including Darin Petersen, who hit .320 a year ago. Petersen will move back to shortstop this year, after playing second base a year ago.

Junior College transfer Scott Wulfinf will open the season at second base. Last year at Riverside (Calif.) Community College, Wulfinf hit .325 and won two California junior college Gold Gloves.

When Brohawn is on the mound, senior Matt McKay will play first. McKay batted .255 with nine homers and 33 RBI a year ago.

Derek Dukart returns to third base after batting .305 with 14 homers and 46 RBI a year ago. His backup will be sophomore David Gappa.

"We're very solid up the middle, and that's a big key," Sanders said. "This will be an interesting bunch to watch."

The top four catchers from last year did not return, but Sanders feels two newcomers will get the job done. The projected starter is freshman Patrick Johnson, a native of Salt Lake City. The 6-foot-3 catcher batted .470 a year ago and was drafted in the 33rd round of the Major League Baseball draft by the Kansas City Royals.

Johnson's backup is David Crain, a transfer from Riverside Community College. He batted .271 a year ago. Former Wayne State College (an NCAA Division II school) Todd Villota enters the year as the Huskers' No. 3 catcher.

The question mark of the team could be pitching even though the Huskers have six returning throwers. The reason is that newcomers will determine the success of the staff.

Even with Brohawn's 13 wins, the returning pitchers posted a 21-11 record last year, and recorded just one save. Sophomore Alvie Shepherd was 3-5 a year ago, while senior Tom Bergan was 2-6. Jason Pflughaupt was 2-0 with a 9.43 ERA and David Gappa was 1-0.

Sophomore Craig Sanders is another veteran in the pitching corps. He sat out last year with a knee injury, but was 3-2 with a 3.00 ERA in 1992.

"We had two seasons last year," Sanders said. "In the first half, our pitchers struggled except for Brohawn. In the second half, our pitching was solid, which explains why we finished the year so well."

But Sanders has a talented group of young pitchers to work into the

1994 Baseball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
F 18	Oral Roberts	Tulsa	2:30 p.m.
F 19	Oral Roberts	Tulsa	1 p.m.
F 20	Oral Roberts	Tulsa	1 p.m.
F 25	Wyoming	Lincoln	7 p.m.
F 26	Wyoming	Lincoln	2 p.m.
F 27	Wyoming	Lincoln	1 p.m.
M 5	Western Illinois	Lincoln	1 p.m.
M 6	Western Illinois	Lincoln	1 p.m.
M 7	Northern Iowa	Lincoln	Noon
M 9	Nebraska-Kearney	Lincoln	7 p.m.

M 14-19 Pepsi/Johnny Quick Classic% Fresno, Calif.

(R-Red Division: Fresno State, Kentucky, Maine, Illinois State)

(B-Blue Division: Nebraska, Washington St., Nevada, New Mexico)

M 14	vs. New Mexico%	1 p.m.
M 15	vs. Nevada%	10 p.m.
M 16	vs. Washington St.%	4 p.m.
M 17	TBA (R1 vs B4; R2 vs. B3; B1 vs. R4; B2 vs. R3)	
M 18	TBA (R1 vs. B2; Re vs. B4; B1 vs. R2; B3 vs. R4)	

M 22	Creighton	Lincoln	7 p.m.
M 25	Missouri	Columbia	7 p.m.
M 26	Missouri	Columbia	2 p.m.
M 27	Missouri	Columbia	1 p.m.
M 30	Oklahoma State	Stillwater	2 p.m.
A 1	Oklahoma State	Lincoln	7 p.m.
A 2	Oklahoma State	Lincoln	2 p.m.
A 3	Oklahoma State	Lincoln	1 p.m.
A 6	Iowa State	Ames	12:30 p.m.
A 7	Nebraska-Kearney	Lincoln	7 p.m.
A 8	Oral Roberts	Lincoln	7 p.m.
A 9	Oral Roberts	Lincoln	2 p.m.
A 10	Oral Roberts	Lincoln	1 p.m.
A 12	Kansas State	Manhattan	TBA
A 13	Kansas State	Manhattan	TBA
A 15	Kansas State	Lincoln	7 p.m.
A 16	Kansas State	Lincoln	2 p.m.
A 17	Kansas State	Lincoln	1 p.m.
A 19	Kansas	Lawrence	3 p.m.
A 20	Kansas	Lawrence	3 p.m.
A 22	Kansas	Lincoln	7 p.m.
A 23	Kansas	Lincoln	2 p.m.
A 24	Kansas	Lincoln	1 p.m.
A 27	Missouri	Lincoln	2 p.m.
A 28	Creighton	Omaha	TBA
M 7	Oklahoma	Norman	4 p.m.
M 8	Oklahoma	Norman	1 p.m.
M 10	Oklahoma	Lincoln	7 p.m.
M 11	Oklahoma	Lincoln	7 p.m.
M 14	Iowa State	Lincoln	1:30 p.m.
M 15	Iowa State	Lincoln	1 p.m.
M 18-21	Big Eight Tournament	Oklahoma City	
May	NCAA Regionals	TBA	TBA
June	College World Series	Omaha	TBA



Darin Petersen (above) will move back to his All-America position, shortstop, this season after playing second last year. Big things are expected from junior Jed Dalton (left), the leader in what could become a powerful outfield unit. Derek Dukart (below) returns for his senior season after batting .305 a year ago.



mix. Of the six that signed with Nebraska, Sanders said any one of them could help out immediately.

Two left-handers, Grady Rohn and Jeff Strasser, came to Nebraska after highly successful high school careers. Rohn, from Arcadia, Calif., was 10-1 and earned All-Southern California honors. Strasser was 12-0 with a 1.18 ERA at Greenway High School in Glendale, Ariz.

Freshman Jonas Armenta of Bloomfield, N.M., was drafted by

San Diego out of high school after going 8-3 with a 1.17 ERA as a senior.

Three transfers round out Sanders' pitching staff. Bob Courter from Hutchinson (Kan.) Junior College, Cody Winget from Southern Idaho and Mike Bellow of Oklahoma could all be big factors on the mound this year.

"Our pitching, with the newcomers, should be a strength," Sanders said.

The pitching will have to come around in a hurry, as the Huskers will compete against one of their toughest schedules in recent history. Nebraska will play 54 games against Division I opponents, 19 of which are against top 20 teams and 33 are against top 40 teams.

On March 14-19, the Husker will compete in the Pepsi/Johnny Quick Classic in Fresno, Calif.

The Huskers will open the Big Eight season at Missouri on March 25-27.

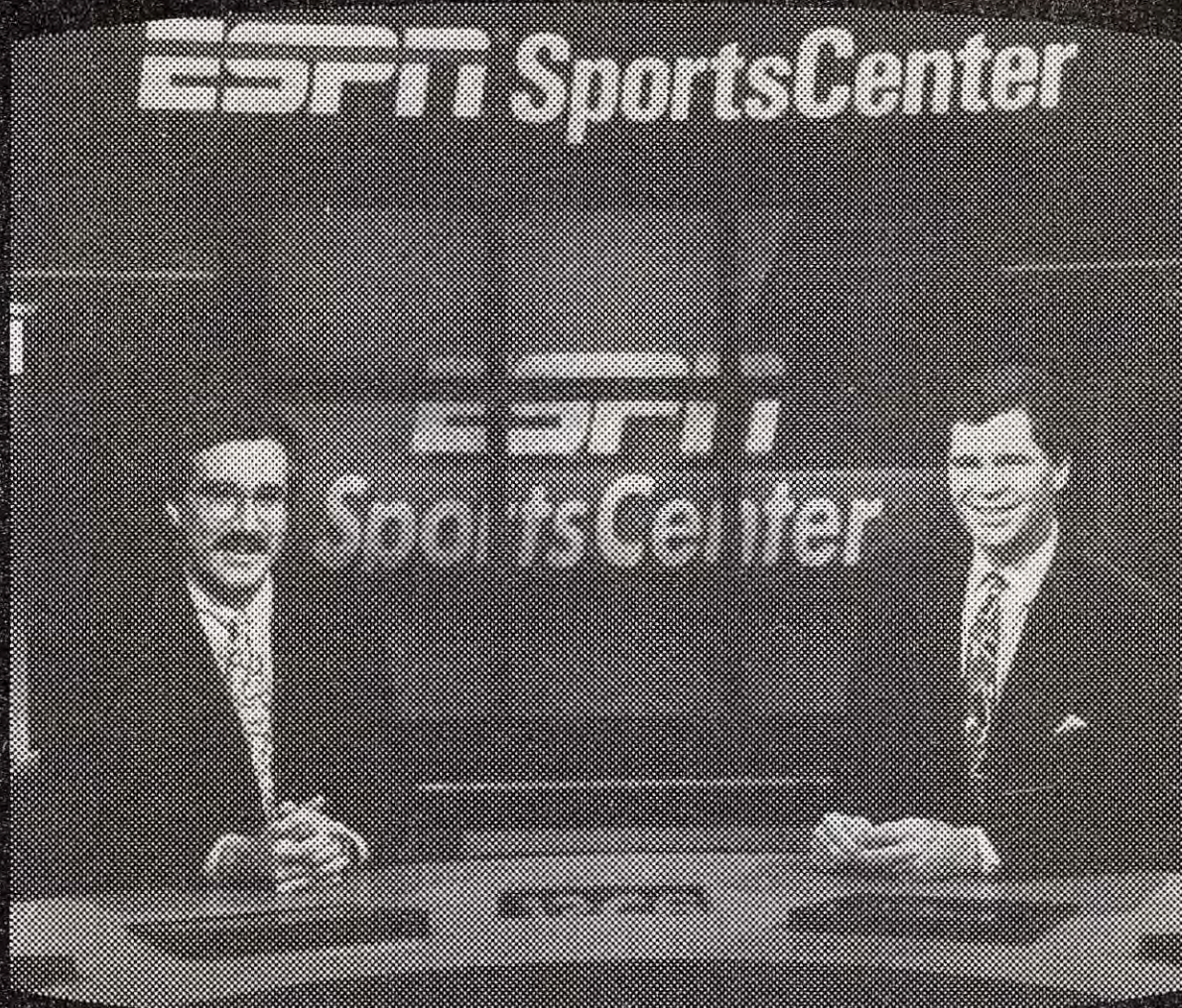
"Last year, we finished third in the Big Eight, and the two teams that finished ahead of us were in the final eight in Omaha," Sanders said, referring to Oklahoma's and Oklahoma State's trip to the College World Series.

"That's how close we were. We feel we should be even better this year." ■

NEBRASKA BASEBALL ROSTER

No.	Name	POS	CL	HT	WT	B	T	No.	Name	POS	CL	HT	WT	B	T
27	Armenta, Jonas	RHP	FR	6-1	200	R	R	25	Johnson, Patrick	C	FR	6-3	195	R	R
20	Bauer, Chris	RHP	JR	6-1	160	R	R	12	McKay, Matt	U/DH	SR	6-3	210	R	R
23	Bellows, Mike	RHP	SR	6-5	210	R	R	33	Petersen, Darin	IF	JR	6-0	177	R	R
40	Bergan, Tom	RHP	SR	6-1	205	R	R	16	Pflughaupt, Jason	RHP	JR	6-2	185	R	R
13	Brohawn, Troy	LHP/U	JR	6-1	190	L	L	22	Rohn, Grady	LHP	FR	6-2	210	L	L
44	Courter, Bob	RHP	JR	6-0	190	L	R	43	Sanders, Craig	RHP	SO	6-4	225	R	R
32	Crain, David	C	JR	6-1	180	R	R	34	Shepherd, Alvie	RHP	SO	6-7	215	R	R
28	Dalton, Jed	OF	JR	6-1	185	R	R	10	Strasser, Jeff	LHP	FR	5-11	160	L	L
24	Dukart, Derek	3B	SR	6-4	205	L	R	7	Strasser, John	IF	FR	5-11	160	R	R
17	Erstad, Darin	OF	SO	6-2	195	L	L	6	Villotta, Todd	C	SO	5-11	175	R	R
5	Gappa, David	RHP/U	SO	6-3	185	R	R	21	Winget, Cody	RHP	JR	6-3	190	R	R
8	Gonzalez, David	OF	JR	6-0	185	R	R	1	Wulfing, Scott	IF	JR	5-11	170	R	R
18	Hesse, Chris	IB/3B	FR	6-1	190	R	R								

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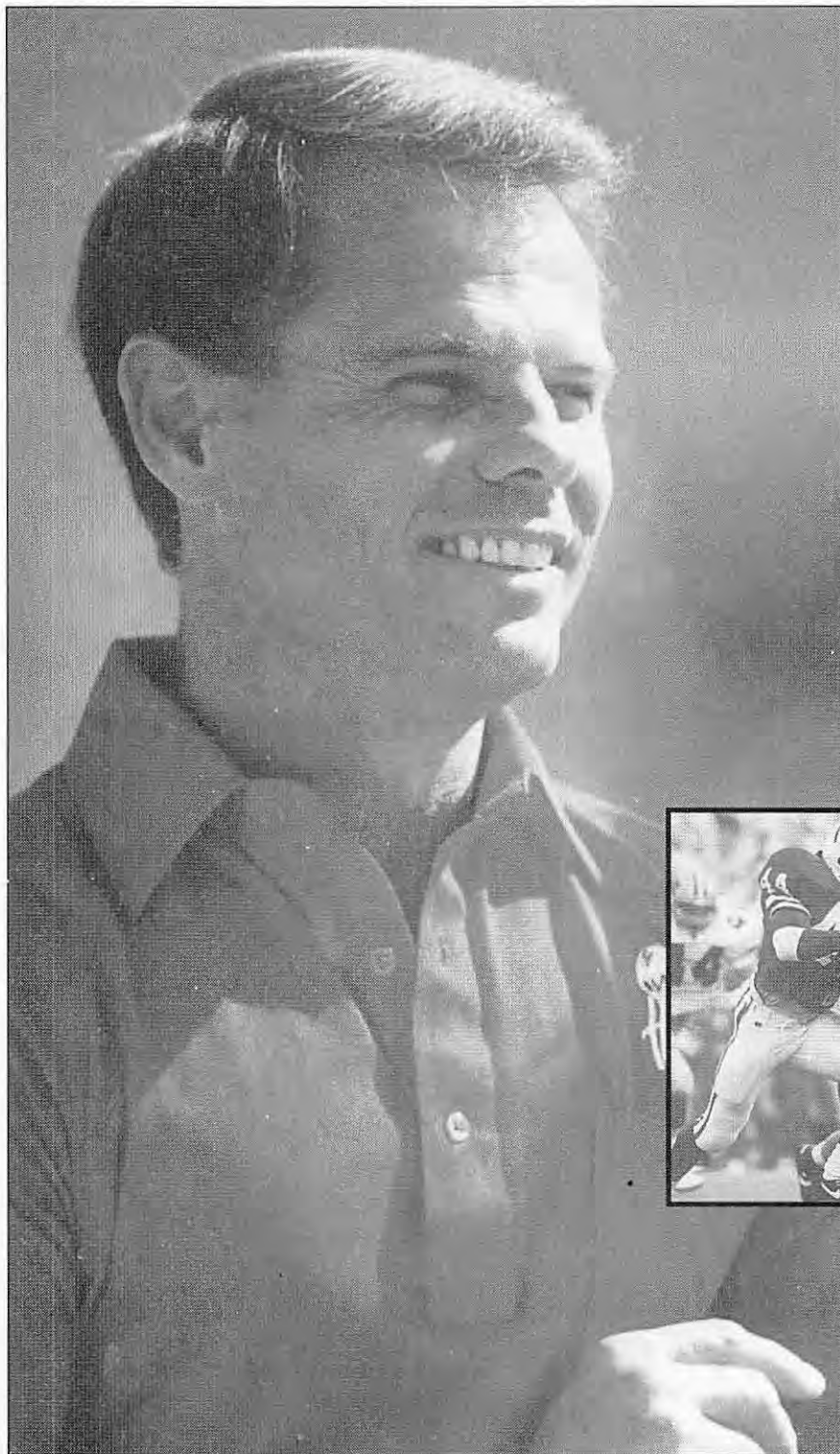
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DEALING WITH DEPARTURES (Again)

With Calvin Jones heading to the NFL, the Nebraska offense will once again have to look for backups to step forward



In late January of 1992, Johnny Mitchell called a news conference to announce he was leaving Nebraska.

"I think it's best for Johnny Mitchell's family," he said, referring to himself in the third person.

"I hope some (NFL) team will give Johnny Mitchell the opportunity. I feel I'm as ready as I'll ever be."

Mitchell played two seasons at Nebraska. He was a sophomore.

In early January of 1993, Derek Brown got off a plane from Phoenix, by way of Denver. "It was a decision, a big decision, and I'm happy with it," he told a newspaper reporter.

Brown's decision was to submit his name for the NFL draft instead of remaining at Nebraska.

He wasn't unhappy playing football for the Cornhuskers, he said. But "I'll be taking care of my two children now, and I'll be taking care of my family. With a pro salary, I should be able to do that."

Brown spent three seasons at Nebraska. He was a junior.

Less than two weeks after Nebraska's Orange Bowl loss to Florida State, Calvin Jones issued a statement through a sports and entertainment management company. The statement said he had filed the appropriate papers to be eligible for the NFL draft.

Jones spent three seasons as a Cornhusker. During those seasons, he rushed for more yards than any player in Nebraska history except

Heisman Trophy winner Mike Rozier.

With the departure of Calvin Jones (inset), running backs coach Frank Solich will enter spring minus a veteran offensive underclassman for the third straight year.





Johnny Mitchell's (86) gamble finally paid off last season when he caught 38 passes for 588 yards and six touchdowns for the New York Jets.

eight ball. We're fortunate that we've got talent in the system, guys who have already performed well."

Jones' return eased the loss of Brown. The return of Damon Benning, Lawrence Phillips and Clinton Childs, among others, will ease the loss of Jones. Nebraska has recruited well at I-back. Jones will be missed, but there is experience at his position.

The good part is that Mitchell, Brown and Jones were talented enough to submit their names for the NFL draft before completing their eligibility. To compete at the highest level requires players good enough to leave early.

The absence of such players would be cause for concern. "You want the guy who has that ability, in this day and age," Solich said.

Jones was a junior.

"It is with deeply mixed feelings that I make this announcement, but I believe this is the best decision for me and my family," he said by way of the prepared statement.

Such announcements are becoming commonplace at Nebraska in January. That's good. And it's bad.

The bad part is obvious. For three consecutive years now, Nebraska has lost an outstanding player to the

NFL draft, prematurely.

"It's tough (on a coach) when you're not blessed with depth," said Frank Solich, Nebraska's assistant head coach and running backs coach.

Solich speaks from experience. Brown and Jones were I-backs.

"Even if you're fortunate to have a guy with great athletic ability in the program, he still doesn't have the experience of the guy who's leaving," Solich said.

"It puts you behind the

DRAFTABLE YOUNGSTERS

Not only will Calvin Jones be competing against plenty of seniors for entry into the NFL, but look at some of the underclassmen (including running backs) who have also renounced their college eligibility in hopes of being drafted.

PLAYER	POS.	COLLEGE
Sam Adams	DE	Texas A&M
Mario Bates	RB	Arizona State
Donnell Bennett	RB	Miami
James Bostic	RB	Auburn
Timothy Bowens	DT	Mississippi
Trent Diler	QB	Fresno State
Marshall Faulk	RB	San Diego State
William Floyd	RB	Florida State
Marvin Goodwin	DB	UCLA
Rodney Harrison	DB	Western Illinois
George Hegamin	T	N.C. State
Greg Hill	RB	Texas A&M
Joe Johnson	DE	Louisville
Calvin Jones	RB	Nebraska
Jimmy Klingler	QB	Houston
Charles Levy	RB	Arizona
Thomas Lewis	WR	Indiana
Dwight McFadden	RB	Southern Cal
Jamir Miller	LB	UCLA
Byron (Bam) Morris	RB	Texas Tech
Anselm Ofodile	TE	Missouri
David Palmer	WR	Alabama
Corey Sawyer	DB	Florida State
Darnay Scott	WR	San Diego State
Heath Shuler	QB	Tennessee
Bruce Walker	DT	UCLA
Lamont Warren	RB	Colorado
Dan Wilkinson	DT	Ohio State
Rodney Woodard	RB	West Virginia

Injuries and being in the right place at the right time helped Derek Brown get the chance to show his wears in the NFL with the New Orleans Saints.



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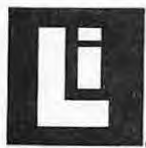
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"I've got no regrets if they leave early, if it's best for them and their families, financially. If they're a top pick, that's great."

If they're not, well, it's a gamble. "On the down side, you'd like to see them get their education, see that they're in position to get their degree," Solich said. "That's tough to take when they don't."

Once a player leaves the program, it's difficult for him to return and finish his degree. For that matter, it's difficult for him to finish second-semester classes.

Those who complete their eligibility often drop out of school during what would be their final semester. "All of a sudden, the next semester is out the window because of all of the demands, the combines and the workouts," said Solich.

"Their efforts are geared to pro football, and it's extremely tough, even when you're only a semester or so away. You just about have to have it written into your contract."

It's impossible to know in what round of the draft a player will be chosen, if he's chosen at all.

Mitchell, a third-team All-American as a sophomore, was the 15th player drafted in the first round of the 1992 draft. He signed a multi-year contract, reportedly worth \$850,000 per season, with a seven-figure bonus.

Mitchell's rookie season with the New York Jets was inauspicious by the standard he had set for himself in two seasons at Nebraska. He played in 11 games, catching 16 passes for 210 yards and one touchdown.

He was sidelined for five games because of a separated shoulder.

Mitchell reported to training camp for his second season some 20 pounds lighter and more aware of what it takes to succeed in the NFL. He started 13 games and caught 38 passes, for 588 yards and six touchdowns.

After two seasons, Mitchell appears to be on his way to a solid professional career. His decision to leave early has been justified.

So has Brown's, though there might have been some doubt after he waited until the fourth round to be drafted by the New Orleans Saints. He expected second or third round. One prominent draft analyst predicted anywhere from fifth to seventh.

Brown proved to be a bargain, starting 12 of the 13 games in which he played. He rushed for 705 yards and two touchdowns on 180 carries

and caught 21 passes for 170 yards and a touchdown, as well as returning three kickoffs.

His situation was enhanced by an injury to a running back ahead of him. "Derek had some things fall right for him, but he was also in tremendous shape and ready to take advantage of the situation," Solich said.

Brown's rookie success was hardly accidental. His professional future appears to be bright.

"I'm glad to see Derek succeed," Solich said.

"If you look at guys (taken) that late in the draft, they might not even make the team, much less start."

Jones has similar potential, according to Solich, not only because of his ability but also because of his dedication and work ethic.

If Jones had remained at Nebraska another season, he probably could have enhanced his position in the draft. He was looking at being featured in the offense of a team contending for a national championship. He would have been among the preseason favorites to succeed Florida State's Charlie Ward as the Heisman Trophy winner.

But returning would have been a gamble, magnified by the injuries that limited his junior season. He suffered a knee sprain in the opener and missed three games — though he did appear for one down against Colorado State so that he could qualify for inclusion in Big Eight Conference statistics.

He was less than full-speed in the Orange Bowl game, but he gave it everything he had to give.

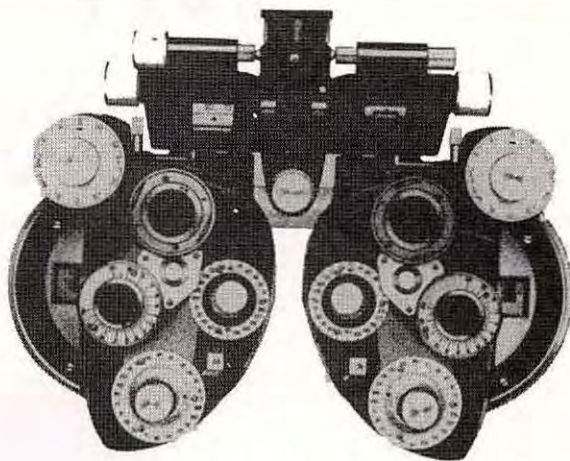
If Jones had been healthy for the three games he missed and had gained an average number of rushing yards, his season's total would have been the fourth-best in school history.

Solich is realistic about the departure of Jones, just as he was realistic about that of Brown.

"The only thing I've asked players when they go is to make a decision by getting their families involved, to make sure they're not listening to people on the outside, people who are trying to make money on them," Solich said. "I tell them, 'Listen to people you know.'"

That's all anyone can reasonably ask. "I wish those guys nothing but the best of luck. They're great competitors, and such great athletes," he said.

That's what it takes to contend for the national championship. ■



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Bill Byrne

On staying in the Big Eight: "We're better off where we are right now."

On gender equity: "We'll be giving 40 percent of our grant-in-aid to women."

On future plans: "Our first goal is to bring Memorial Stadium into the 21st century."

On Jan. 4, 1993, Bill Byrne became the 10th athletic director in University of Nebraska history, succeeding Bob Devaney.

Prior to accepting the job at Nebraska, in June of 1992, Byrne served as athletic director at the University of Oregon for eight years.

Byrne also has been assistant athletic director at San Diego State, executive director for the University of New Mexico's Lobo Club and director of alumni relations at Idaho State.

He and his wife, Marilyn, recently moved into a home in Lincoln, after spending their first year-plus living in the University Towers while their home was being built.

Byrne talks with *Huskers Illustrated* about his first year on the job as a Cornhusker.

Huskers Illustrated: Do you feel comfortable in Nebraska now?

Bill Byrne: "I think it takes about a year for people, families, whoever, when they make a move to start feeling like a part of things. Every time you walk into a room, you see a bunch of strange faces. But now as I walk into rooms, I recognize more and more people and feel much more welcome."

"Because Nebraska has not had much transition, people were very comfortable with each other. This is a stable place. Someone moving in has to really work hard to get to know people. Marilyn and I have been treated very warmly and welcome by Nebraskans."

HI: Given the stability in the department to which you refer, were you concerned about fitting in?

Byrne: "I thought having as much experience as I've had in athletics, and having moved several times, we've always fit in well. That's because we've gone out of our way to make friends. The same thing



"I subscribe to Satchel Paige's theory: Don't look back, somebody might be gaining on you."

happened here. We were well-received. We really were — 99.9 percent of the people have greeted me with open arms."

HI: In a less successful department, a new administrator would have some clear-cut and immediate responsibilities. That wasn't the case here. Wasn't it running smoothly?

Byrne: "Yes, but there were still some things that needed some attention, as far as the way the organization had been established. We needed to have some clearer lines of communication and responsibility established. I think we've done that."

HI: What were some of your immediate goals when you took over?

Byrne: "Meet people and feel comfortable. Those were my first

two goals. Besides that, I wanted to get a handle on how the place was organized, who the players were and how people interacted with each other."

"Then I wanted to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the staff, make any adjustments I thought might make for a more efficient organization. That's something you always want to do as a manager."

"We've made some adjustments, moved some people to some places that I think will give them a greater chance to help the organization."

HI: Gender equity is a concern among NCAA institutions. What is your opinion of the attempts to achieve gender equity through proportionality?

Byrne: "It's gone to the courts now. I think you've seen the NCAA back away from it. You heard some of the shriller voices saying the NCAA chickened out. That's what they've said about the NCAA convention this time, when, in fact, they've led the fight to bring gender equity into the courtroom."

"That's where the issues are being decided now. It's not something that can be said about the NCAA unilaterally when individual schools are being sued."

HI: Is this movement into the courts a concern at Nebraska?

Byrne: "That's one of the reasons we looked at our position and felt we needed to add an 11th women's sport and to jump our scholarship numbers up to what is basically the proportion of under-represented gender, females, in the student body."

"This next year, we'll be giving 40 percent of our grant-in-aid to women, 40 percent of our athletic scholarships, and 42 percent of our student body are women. So we're right there when it comes to gender equity."

"We did that by adding soccer."

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Byrne has awarded a contract to HOK (company which designed Camden Yards) to improve Memorial Stadium and other facilities on the Nebraska campus.

tury. We're looking at a variety of things there. Our priorities are a medical treatment center, up-grade that as well as our locker rooms, improvement of our rest room facilities and concessions, and then the amenities for the fans, like skyboxes. We also want to take a hard look at a Hall of Champions, not just for football but all sports.

"We want to see what we can do to re-attract the NCAA Track and Field Championships to Lincoln because it makes all of the sense in the world for us to have them here. It's a great economic benefit to the community."

HI: What's the status of the Memorial Stadium video screens?

Byrne: "We're out for bid on the instant replay boards. We hope to have those in for the fall. The new sound system would have been in place for last season, until Section 14 collapsed."

HI: The section of the stadium collapsing must have been a low point in your first year at Nebraska?

Byrne: "Everybody said, 'Geez, Byrne, you show up and the stadium falls down.' I said, 'I'm glad it happened when it did.' I was really concerned about that. Our first goal was to ensure the structural stability of the stadium. If we

don't have the stadium, we don't eat. It's the lifeblood of our whole program. I was glad to learn the stadium could last safely as long as we need it to, as long as we maintain it."

HI: What were some of the other negatives in your first year?

Byrne: "Really nothing else. There were some pretty good highs as a matter of fact, though. We had 15 of 21 teams in post-season competition. We won the Big Eight All Sports Trophy, had a number of academic All-Americans, athletic All-Americans and Top Six Award winners."

HI: How would you summarize your first year on the job?

Byrne: "I'm proud to be part of the program. It's certainly one of the best in the United States." ■

We knew which sport we wanted to add. We didn't do this just because we felt it was something we wanted to do. We had systematic reasons for doing it."

HI: If Nebraska's athletic department offers 40 percent of its scholarships to women and the student body is approximately 40 percent women, then you're in compliance, right?

Byrne: "We're a national leader; there's no doubt we are. All you have to do is take a look at what is happening in the courts to find out it's much less expensive to add a few scholarships than it is to battle something to the Supreme Court because the lawyers are the only ones who make out financially there. I can probably tell you a lot more about this subject than you want to know."

HI: Are you optimistic that the Big Eight Conference can survive?

Byrne: "Yes. I've always said the first thing we need to do is keep the College Football Association together. People have heard me say that; I've said it consistently. We need to sign that television contract. Then, the next thing we need to do is keep the Big Eight together."

"We're better off where we are right now than we would be going anywhere else. What we need to think about, and we are, is whether the Big Eight might be better off adding teams. We're actively considering that."

HI: Does the talk of a television pact between the CBS and the Southeastern Conference concern you?

Byrne: "It certainly does. It could jeopardize the CFA. That's a huge concern. Absolutely. The CFA has been very good for college football. I

think we can keep it together. But it's scary as hell. We've got a big-time problem. We've got to keep it together."

"What I'm afraid will happen to college football is what happened to college basketball — the television networks running the show. We have super-saturated the market. The price the networks pay now has gone down dramatically. No one has any market share. That's precisely what I'm afraid will happen with something like the SEC going off to CBS. In the long run, it will do nothing but hurt college athletics."

HI: Nebraska's dramatic run at the national championship in football must have been a positive in your first year on the job?

Byrne: "It was great, great fun. Gosh, I had a good time. That was just super. I was so proud of our kids and our coaches. We were brilliantly coached, and our kids played as hard as they possibly could play."

"I was told that night by some of our staff that I really fit in with Nebraska. That was one of the nicest things said to me since I got here."

HI: What do your future plans for Nebraska's program include?

Byrne: "We've awarded a contract to HOK out of Kansas City, an internationally known sports architectural firm. They did Joe Robbie Stadium. They did Camden Yards. They're putting together a master plan for us, for all of our facilities."

"Our first goal is to bring Memorial Stadium into the 21st cen-

"I'm proud to be part of the (Nebraska) program. It's certainly one of the best in the United States."



RUTZ TRANSFERS TO NEO

Ben Rutz, a scholarship quarterback from Putnam City West High School in Oklahoma City, transferred to Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College following the fall semester.

Rutz, a prep All-American, was in the same recruiting class as Tommie Frazier, a two-season starter at quarterback. "I just didn't feel like waiting around until my senior year to get some playing time," Rutz said.

"And I figured by then, they'd have another great option quarterback, and I might never play. I think this will be the best for me and my hopes of playing quarterback in college.

"Northeastern has one of the strongest junior college programs in the country, and after next year, I'll have a chance to look around and see where I can finish my last two years.

"I made a lot of friends and I enjoyed the program. But I just didn't see where I'd be playing much in the future."

After sitting out his first season at Nebraska as a redshirt, Rutz suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament in the second scrimmage of spring practice and wasn't able to play until the fourth game last fall, against Colorado State. He saw action in only three other games, and finished with two pass completions in two attempts for 36 yards, against



Norm Schindler

Redshirt freshman quarterback Ben Rutz (8) decided he didn't want to spend another two years playing backup to Tommie Frazier (15) and transferred to Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College.

Missouri.

Rutz's departure leaves the Cornhuskers with only two returning scholarship quarterbacks: Frazier and Brook Berringer, both juniors.

Tony Veland, also a junior, has indicated he plans to move to the secondary in the spring.

1994 SCHEDULE CHANGE

Nebraska's 1994 football schedule has been revised. The season will

begin on Sept. 8, against Texas Tech in Lubbock, Texas, instead of on Sept. 3 against Wyoming in Lincoln.

The Texas Tech game, originally scheduled for Sept. 10, was moved to a Thursday night in order to accommodate the ESPN television network.

The Wyoming game has been rescheduled for Oct. 1, what had been an open date before the start of Big Eight play against Oklahoma State. The Cornhuskers will now play four consecutive home games, six on the season.

At press time, Nebraska was still discussing the possibility of playing in either the Kickoff Classic in East Rutherford, N.J., or the Pigskin Classic in Anaheim, Calif., at the end of August. West Virginia has been mentioned as a possible opponent in the Kickoff Classic, while Fresno State seems the most likely opponent for a game in Anaheim.

Nebraska has played in the Kickoff Classic twice, including the inaugural game in 1983, which it won against Penn State 44-6.

The Cornhuskers returned to the Kickoff Classic in 1988 and defeated Texas A&M 23-14. Teams are eligible

REVISED 1994 NEBRASKA SCHEDULE

(Kickoff Times Are Subject To Change)

Date	Opponent	Site	Kickoff
Sept. 8	Texas Tech	Lubbock	7:00 p.m.
Sept. 17	UCLA	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Sept. 24	Pacific	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Oct. 1	Wyoming	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Oct. 8	Oklahoma State	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Oct. 15	Kansas State	Manhattan	1:00 p.m.
Oct. 22	Missouri	Columbia	1:00 p.m.
Oct. 29	Colorado	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Nov. 5	Kansas	Lincoln	1:00 p.m.
Nov. 12	Iowa State	Ames	1:00 p.m.
Nov. 25	Oklahoma	Norman	1:30 p.m.



Clinton Childs (left) will spend the spring wrestling at 190 pounds for Tim Neumann's nationally-ranked squad.

IT'S COACH STANARD NOW

Former Cornhusker Steve Stanard recently was named head football coach at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Stanard, who lettered as a defensive end at Nebraska in 1987, had been the defensive coordinator at Wesleyan for three seasons.

PUTTING DEGREE TO WORK

Kevin Ramaekers, a starting defensive tackle for the Cornhuskers in 1993, has begun working full-time as an athletic department fund-raiser.

Ramaekers received a degree in human development and the family in August and had worked in Nebraska's Ambassadors program for two summers.

FREE AGENCY HUSKERS

Former Cornhuskers Tom Rathman, Jeff Mills, Roger Craig and Jamie Williams were among 499 players in the National Football League who will be unrestricted free agents this year, according to a preliminary list released by the NFL Players Association in late January.

Rathman and Williams finished this season with the San Francisco 49ers, Craig with the Minnesota Vikings and Mills with the Denver Broncos. ■

for the preseason games every five years.

CONDITIONING CRUNCH

Strength and conditioning coach Boyd Epley and his staff apparently have their work cut out for them during Nebraska's winter conditioning program. This based on the tests conducted at the start of the class, anyway.

On the average, the Cornhuskers aren't as fast or as agile as the last two teams — plus, they're heavier.

The 1993 team, of course, was the fastest in school history. The five fastest players in the 40-yard dash testing were Mike Minter (:04.41), Tyrone Williams (:04.45), Leslie Dennis (:04.48), Riley Washington (:04.47) and Lawrence Phillips (:04.48).

Minter, a sophomore, is a line-backer. Williams and Dennis are defensive backs. Washington is a wide receiver, and Phillips is an I-back.

Minter's 40 time was the fifth best all-time. In addition, he set a record for points on the performance index, making him the strongest player on the team pound-for-pound.

Williams' 40 time was a record for Cornhusker defensive backs.

WRESTLING WITH A CHANGE

Clinton Childs, a sophomore I-back from Omaha, has joined Coach Tim Neumann's wrestling team and could provide some help at 190 pounds. Childs was a Nebraska state Class A champion at Omaha North High School.

Former Husker and "current" San Francisco 49er, Tom Rathman could end up in another jersey next season due to free agency.



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